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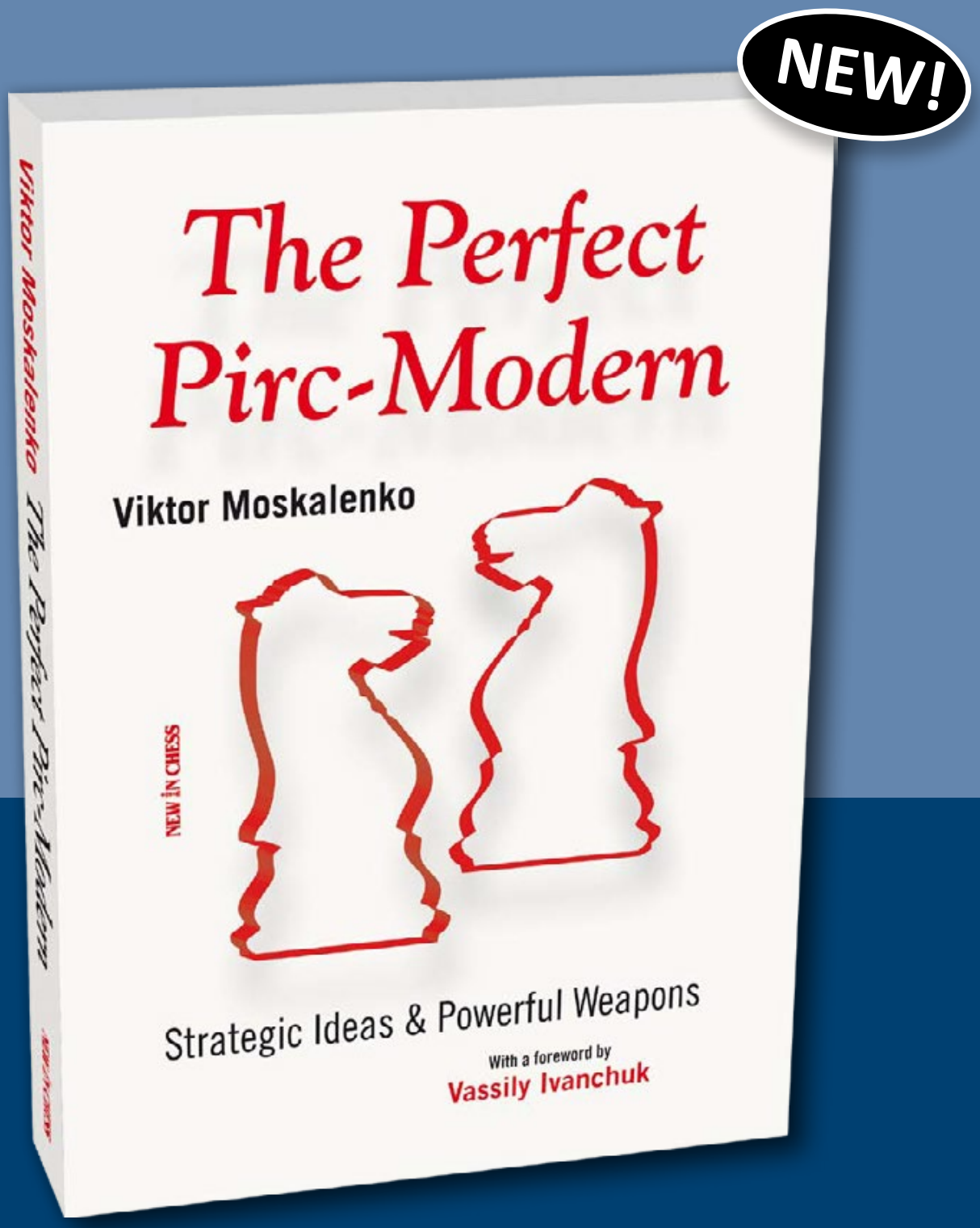

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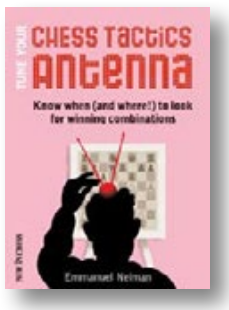

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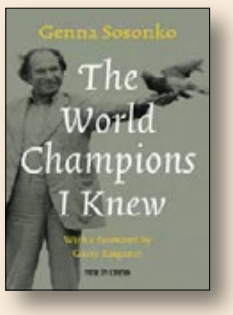

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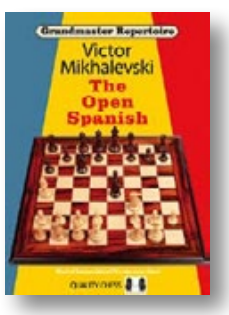

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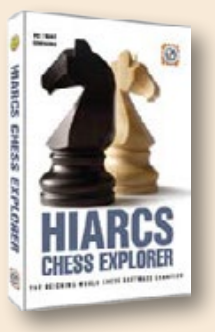

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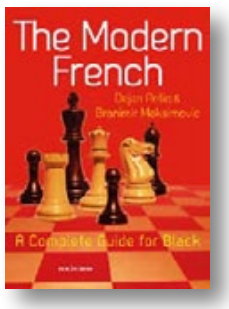

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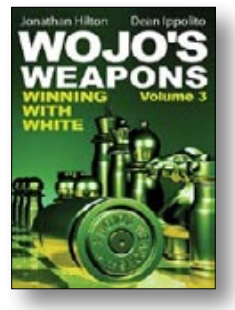

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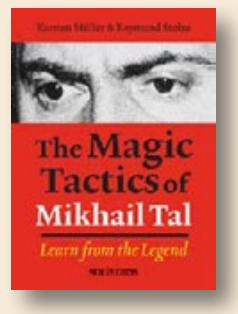

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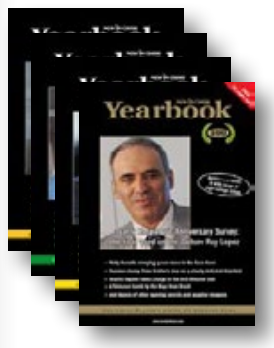

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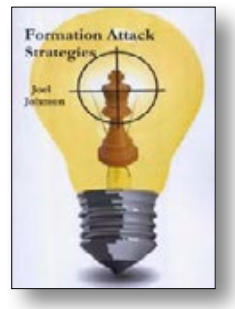

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'After Bilbao 2011 my big problem was getting interesting positions, where I had chances. This year the new problem has been exploiting those chances. I've been gifting people half points. If it wasn't for that, my results would be much better. Still, it's a hundred times better to have the second problem!'
– Vishy Anand after his win in Baden-Baden

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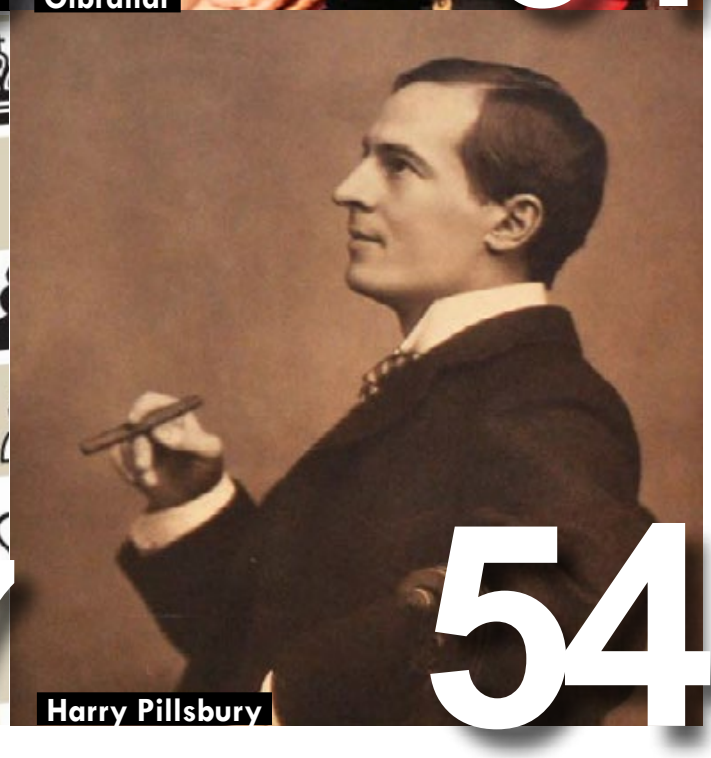

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Mentality

Often when we speak about the promotion of chess, we argue that the game should be attractive as a spectator sport. And mostly we realize that, as it is, chess is not much of a spectator sport. Take the Reykjavik Open, one of the most popular opens on the calendar and rightly so. A great country, hospitable people, a marvellous venue, what more do you want? Spectators? There are hardly any in the hall, but there are thousands who follow the live broadcasts on the Internet. Are their interests looked after? Yes and no. They have a bunch of games to choose from and there is live commentary to entertain them. But what happened in the last round? What might have been a rousing finale with the two leaders meeting head-on, turned out to be a big anti-climax

Glad that it's all over. Pavel Eljanov and Wesley So shake hands after 3 moves of Grünfeld theory.

when the game ended in a draw after three moves. Here's the big clash between Pavel Eljanov and Wesley So: 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 ½-½.

A telling detail was that at first no one really seemed to care. The organizer said he understood, it was fine with him, and the players even took their time to proudly pose for a photograph with the final position between them. And then an emotional discussion erupted. Wasn't it a disgrace that the players showed such contempt for their audience? Or was their decision easy to understand? Should the organizers be blamed? Hardly. They might have forced them to play 30 or 40 moves, but if the players really wanted a draw they would have solved that problem without much effort either. Can we blame the players? Hardly. They secured shared first place and Eljanov even knew that whatever happened in the other games, he would get the biggest cut of the prize-money.

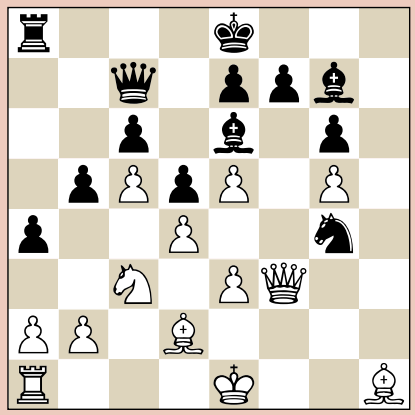
Still it leaves us with an uncomfortable feeling and we wonder why that is. It's easy. Consciously or subconsciously we think of the chess players that excite us most. Players like Carlsen, Topalov, Kasparov, Fischer, and there are several more. Players who want to win all the time. Who are ready to play 10 games if a tournament lasts 10 rounds. Who don't understand that at the age of 19, Wesley So doesn't even try to win the tournament alone and that instead he is happy to be one of several players who split first prize. It's all about mentality, and as long as this mentality doesn't change, rules to force the players to play will only have limited effect. Fortunately, it used to be much worse in times not that distant, when most players felt there was nothing wrong with creating some extra free days by making short draws. It's certainly true that today's chess is much more fighting, thanks to the examples mentioned, but we still have a long way to go. With the right mentality each player would try to play each round that a tournament lasts. That's not always possible, there may be days that you have a headache, but essentially that should be the ambition.

After Eljanov and So had drawn their game, six players could catch up with them to share first place. Only one of them succeeded: Amin Bassem from Egypt, who beat Grzegorz Gajewski of Poland. Together these three divided 8,250 euro according to the Hort system, meaning that Eljanov got most.

For Eljanov it was a shame that this non-game of the last day will probably be remembered better than the great games he played in the rest of the tournament. That's a pity and he could have avoided it. Here's an example of what he is really capable of.

SL 3.1 – D15
Ding Liren
Pavel Eljanov
Reykjavik Open 2013 (9)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 The Chebanenko Slav remains popular. **5.e3 ♗f5 6.♕b3 b5 7.c5 a5 8.♘e5 a4 9.♕d1 g6** An idea of Victor Bologan's, who documented his expertise in this opening in his book *The Chebanenko Slav*. **10.♗d2 ♗g7 11.g4** This aggressive looking move will mainly provoke Black's aggression. Here and on the previous move, sacrificing the knight on c6 was an interesting possibility. **11...♗e6 12.♗g2 h5! 13.h3 ♕c7 14.f4 hxg4 15.hxg4 ♖xh1+ 16.♗xh1 ♘bd7 17.g5 ♘xe5 18.fxe5 ♘g4 19.♕f3**



White's attacking chances are hard to detect. Now Eljanov jumps at the opportunity to sacrifice a piece for a couple of pawns and a fairly risk-free initiative. **19...♘xe5!? 20.dxe5 ♕xe5 21.♕f4?** An unfortunate idea that leads to a premature end of the game. He should have surrendered a third pawn with 21.a3, when after 21...♕xg5 22.0-0-0 White's position is difficult but not hopeless. **21...♕xf4 22.exf4 b4 23.♘e2?** A weak move, which speeds up the end. **23...a3** The Chebanenko pawn has moved from a6 to a3 to deal the final blow. White resigned.

What is a rule?

Among the most common measures these days to keep players from making short draws are the anti-drawing rules that forbid them to end a game peacefully before a certain

number of moves have been made. Despite repeated criticism, these rules have been remarkably successful, which in itself says a lot about the ambitions of many chess players when they are not forced to play. Still, these anti-drawing rules are not always effective, as witness this year's Gibraltar Chess Congress.

One of the highlights were the varied and popular 'Master Classes', and

MACAULEY PETERSON

Having saved energy earlier in the day, Vassily Ivanchuk was ready to answer any question Stuart Conquest could think of.

the most popular of the five presented this year was by Vassily Ivanchuk, who was highly animated as he took questions from the audience and host Stuart Conquest for nearly half an hour.

The Master Class was ostensibly a form of penance, for a minor infraction of the tournament rule. Earlier in the day, Ivanchuk's seventh round pairing with Le Quang Liem ended after just fourteen moves in an equal and symmetrical position, while the tournament regulations mandated that games be played out to at least move 30. The players had left the playing hall before the anomaly was noticed by the arbiters and the organizers, who initially considered requiring the game to be replayed. Le actually remained near the hall for quite some time awaiting a decision from his opponent, who was reluctant to return. Ivanchuk, evidently, was in no mood to replay the game.

Ironically, a similarly quick draw occurred between two amateur players during the same round, and they *were* in fact asked to replay their game. Ultimately the matter was simply dropped. The comment of later winner Nikita Vitiugov was nicely succinct: 'It isn't a rule when somebody can break it.'

Watching with the stars

After his sweeping victory in Wijk aan Zee, Magnus Carlsen felt he had deserved a break and of course no one was going to argue with that. Eager to divert his mind, he travelled to the United States. The first days were still filled with business, including an event in Las Vegas with his new American sponsor Parallels ('a worldwide leader in hosting and cloud service enablement and desktop virtualization') but then it was time for some fun. Together with a friend he went to see a number of basketball matches in Boston, Philadelphia and New York. In Madison Square Garden he saw the New York Knicks take on the LA Clippers. It's not easy to get good tickets for such matches, but if you're well connected you may even get ringside tickets! And there he was, in second row, seated behind Hollywood celebrities Tom Hanks, Christopher McDonald, Olivia Wilde, Jason Sudeikis, Ben Stiller and Christine Taylor. While they seem to feel comfortable with the attention of the photographers, the Norwegian looks less thrilled by the attention of the paparazzi.

Seated behind Tom Hanks and his buddies, Magnus Carlsen watches the New York Knicks vs. the LA Clippers in Madison Square Garden.

Sweet dreams

Andrei Filatov is a man with many dreams. When he staged the World Championship match in the Moscow Tretyakov Gallery he fulfilled one of them, but the Russian businessman immediately made it clear that he had further visions of bringing chess and art together. One of them was an Alekhine Memorial in the Louvre in Paris. Many months of complicated negotiations followed, but finally Filatov could announce another unique double success. To begin with he and his business partner Gennady Timchenko signed an agreement with Henri Loyrette, the Director of the Louvre Museum, 'to support the expansion of the Louvre's collection in the area of Russian art'. Currently, the collection of the Louvre only includes ancient Russian icons. As part of the agreement, they will expand its collection by adding Russian paintings. And indeed the Louvre will open its doors for chess as well. On April 21 the first round of the Alekhine Memorial will be played in the museum complex. After five rounds the tournament will move to the Mikhailovsky Palace of the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg for the final four rounds. The names of the players? Vishy Anand, Levon Aronian, Vladimir Kramnik, Peter Svidler, Boris Gelfand, Nikita Vitiugov, Mickey Adams, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Laurent Fressinet and Ding Liren. ■

NEW IN CHESS

Andrei Filatov: Tretyakov Gallery, the Louvre, what's next?

Your Move

Setting the record straight

It is with great appreciation for the Editorial Board that I read New In Chess 2012/8, including the article penned by GM Ivan Sokolov, 'Borislav Ivkov, not a genius, but what a great player', awaking memories of a bygone career, including five of my games. And yet, had I had a choice, I would have rather remained in indifferent oblivion in lieu of GM Sokolov's gambit (from the ancient Italian 'gambetto', meaning 'to trip someone up').

As if written by a split hand, even-handed paragraphs are intermixed with deceptive half-truths. Taking into account space limitations, I will point out the most brazen cases of manipulation, paralogisms (the use of false premises to reach conclusions), and quoting out of context, merely to name a few.

My arrogance

The bulk of GM Sokolov's criticism stems from his review of *My 60 Years in Chess*, a book I published in Serbian five years ago. GM Sokolov denounces my arrogance, '*The only irritating aspect of the book is Ivkov's attempt to paint himself as a genius... He repeats over and over again that he has never worked, prepared or studied. Apparently, he was more or less born clever! A natural genius! Playing all sorts of different openings against the world's very best, without doing any work – just by having been born clever!*' What a torrent of irritation! GM Sokolov passionately rejects the possibility of being born smart...

GM Sokolov continues with the cardinal proof of my arrogance, quoting my admission of visiting GM Velimirovic half an hour before my game against GM Timman (Amsterdam 1974). I reiterate – my preparation for this game did last just about 30 minutes. GM Velimirovic revealed his idea of 9.♗d3 and GM Timman indeed played the next moves as anticipated. There was no in-depth analysis of numerous variations and forced moves... Finally, the *coup de grâce*: '*a detail Ivkov "forgets" to mention*' – GM Sokolov is carefully laying out the evidence: the previous year, in Petropolis, Bronstein beat Ljubojevic in a comparable variation, and I must have known that, therefore I must have prepared for the game for longer than 30 minutes! I reiterate – I was, in fact, present in Petropolis at the time, and, alas, I saw that game, and so did every half-sober chess player then and there...

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It is without particular pride but with the humility of advanced age that I am quoting the ensuing lines, an independent source that concurs with the general description of my disposition vis-a-vis scrupulous labour between tournaments: *'Ivkov is an extremely handsome and imposing gentleman and the adulation of his fans and that of the ladies may have contributed to his loss of form.'* – The Batsford Chess Encyclopaedia by Nathan Divinsky.

GM Sokolov shows my three wins against Fischer and Petrosian. Puzzled, he states: '*Strangely enough, these three brilliant games are all absent in Ivkov's My 60 Years in Chess!*' What is not absent in my book are a number of other players' games, positions and narratives besides my own games. GM Sokolov fails to pick up on a distinction between my book and many other players' 'autobiographical' texts. Starting with Tarrasch, Botvinnik, Keres, Smyslov, Tal, Karpov, Larsen, Kortchnoi and concluding with Gligoric, Gufeld and Sisniega, a common attribute prevails – they all wrote almost exclusively about their victories.

It is incomprehensible to GM Sokolov that I failed to include some of my triumphs against World Champions in the book. Plainly, there was not enough room. Aside from having included sixteen of my defeats, reminiscences about my early (Copenhagen 1953) and late (Bugojno 1982) debacles, I distinctively complimented the players I *de facto* had attained knowledge from (Velimirovic, Vukcevic, Minic, Parma). In the face of GM Sokolov's characterization: '*more or less born clever! A natural genius!*'

The classical tripartite account of knowledge that goes back to Plato requires the truth[a] and one's belief [b] in that truth based on a reason to believe in it – a justification [c]. It doesn't require an Edmund Gettier to disprove GM Sokolov's inference, as clearly his premises are unfounded[a] and his passionate irritation[b] has no rational justification[c].

Arrogance, to paraphrase Montaigne, belongs half to the speaker and half to the listener.

Politics

Witnesses to the Cold War era remember how sports and international competition were exploited by state propaganda in Eastern Block countries. Tito's regime was no different in that regard. All grandmasters in Yugoslavia, particularly Olympians, were pressured into joining the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Of the four Olympians portrayed in the picture on page 77 of the article (Matanovic, Gligoric, Milic, Ivkov) I remained the only non-member. To my mind, GM Milunka Lazarevic and I were the only top players who never acquiesced to the pressure from the 1950s into the 1970s. I was willing to lose some of the privileges that came with party loyalty and affiliation, and I did. After the demise of socialism in the 1980s to the present day, when asked, I chose not to publicly denounce socialism, either.

Ironically, against such a backdrop, GM Sokolov depicts me during my tenure as Yugoslav team coach as '*craving authority*' and injects the words '*Politburo style*' in the same paragraph. At the time the young Ivan Sokolov apparently '*had other dealings with him [me]...This combination did not work*

out well, to put it mildly' ... And yet, I commended Ivan Sokolov's talent and granted him the opportunity to play Board 1 at the European championship in Haifa, following a decisive blunder at the preceding Olympiad, costing the Yugoslav team a medal.

I do recall the then-boyish Ivan Sokolov; however, his assertion comes as a revelation to me that we had a personal relationship of any kind, let alone '*...dealings...*'. In like manner, was I a coach '*with defined, mostly not very flexible opinions*'? Ivan Sokolov's impression, if not impartial, is essentially correct. Simply put, I knew better – having previously played twelve Olympiads and having won eleven medals. At the time of this writing and having resigned that post at the time of my choosing, I remain the most successful national team coach in the history of Yugoslav chess.

De mortuis nil nisi bonum

GM Sokolov skilfully manoeuvred me in a zugzwang position where I am to choose between not talking bad about the deceased vs. speaking the truth. Being on the verge of my ninth decade on earth, I settle upon the truth. GM Sokolov's inquisitive mind marvels: '*This makes me wonder why, with so much talent, he always remained in the shadow of Gligoric, who, contrary to Borislav, always spoke openly about his work and his professionalism and never claimed to have been born clever.*' In the end, the following facts should speak for themselves: during two time periods, 1954-1955 and 1964-1965, I placed higher than GM Gligoric in all the seven strongest international tournaments of the period (Belgrade 1954, Mar del Plata 1955, Buenos Aires 1955, Zagreb 1955, Amsterdam 1964, Belgrade 1964, Zagreb 1965. Havana 1965 not included as GM Gligoric did not participate). I did not feel in the shadows.

There is a story that begs to be told to set the record straight: following my string of strong results and the triumph in Zagreb in 1965, a routine meeting of the Yugoslav Chess Federation regarding the team composition for the forthcoming European championship was scheduled. From the start everyone, including all the players, insisted that I represent Yugoslavia on Board 1. All present, but a clan of two: GM Gligoric, supported by Dragisa Ivanovic (the regime' s appointee to the presidency of the YCF) would have none of it! The two former World War II partisan comrades held off against everyone for hours. Late into the night GM Gligoric threw in the towel and uttered 'OK, let him play Board 1'. So, when GM Sokolov quotes GM Gligoric's recent statement: '*He played excellently in the mid-60s and I occasionally let him play Board 1 on the national team*,' the reader can now grapple with the meaning of 'let'.

'Lies, damned lies and statistics'

A total of three Yugoslav players ever qualified for the Candidates' Matches, GM Gligoric, GM Nikolic and I. I just learned that even such success can be manipulated to diminish its value. GM Sokolov states: '*In 1964 he qualified for the Candidates' matches at the Amsterdam Interzonal. It is fair to mention that qualifying for the Candidates' was much easier at the time... Ivkov's performance in Amsterdam was not too brilliant. Against the top 10 players he only gathered 4 and a half points*'.

First, GM Sokolov disregards the fact the 1964 Amsterdam Interzonal was the strongest Interzonal ever played. The list of participants speaks for itself.

Second, GM Sokolov appears not to understand the fact that the sole point of contesting a qualifying tournament is to qualify, and contenders fine-tune their strategy according to the goal which is, again, to – qualify. This point has never been a professional secret. (Incidentally, three months later, in Belgrade, I shared second place with Kortchnoi, in front of Larsen, Bronstein, Gligoric; and there followed, according to GM Sokolov: '*a brilliant victory in Zagreb*'.)

Third, as proof of my '*not too brilliant performance (at the Interzonal)*', GM Sokolov demonstrates his point by arbitrarily calculating my score against the top 10 placed contestants in Amsterdam. Why not the conventional 'top half' analysis against the top 12, out of 24 contestants? Inconveniently, my score emerges better (6 and a half out of 12) in that case... Yet, why stop there? Following GM Sokolov' s logic in challenging my historical adequacy to qualify why not analyse my composite score against all Soviet players at all five Interzonal tournaments that I played? (Smyslov, Spassky, Tal, Bronstein, Petrosian, Stein, Kortchnoi, Geller, Polugaevsky, Taimanov, Keres, Vaganian, Balashov and Shamkovich). In such a complete analysis of the total 22 games played I assembled 11 and a half points out of 22! (+3 –2 =17).

Final thoughts

GM Sokolov concludes his prudent analysis with a sweeping generalization *'In general this is what I would call the Yugoslav syndrome... I only remember it too well and fortunately the younger generation is better*!'... I earnestly wish that GM Sokolov's statement about the younger Yugoslav chess generation were remotely true. At any rate his belief, yet again, lacks justification in facts. I wish for the consistent team successes from the 1950s through the 1980s. And the individual achievements of the era. And the decades-long status as the second-ranked chess nation in the world.

An aria from *Die Zauberflöte* dawns on me: '... those words sound fine and brave, I know, but say, how do I hope to find them? For neither love nor truth is found by men whose hate and vengeance blind them...'

As for GM Ivan Sokolov's disposition and journalistic integrity – I shall leave it to the reader to unravel the enigma. As his former team coach, I remain proud of his accomplishments as a player.

Borislav Ivkov
Southampton, New York, USA

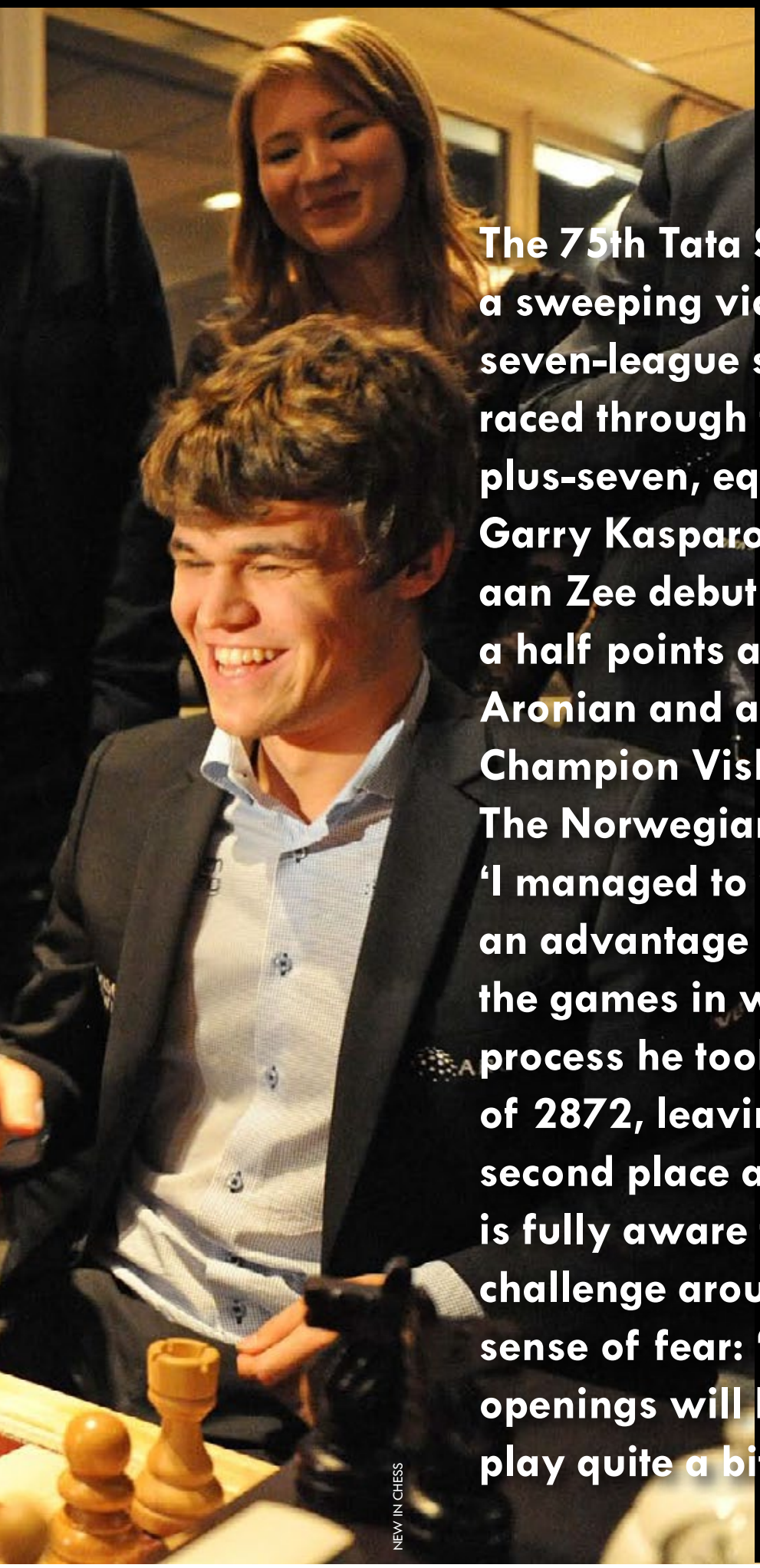
2872, but not there yet

Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam

The last night was great fun, with Magnus Carlsen taking on all comers (in this case Hou Yifan) in the bar of the Zeeduin Hotel. Sergey Shipov is visibly happy with his ringside seat.

As Magnus Carlsen was showered with praise, his fans and the press had a wealth of records and statistics to choose from to underline the weight of his historic victory. His third win in Wijk aan Zee was his first super-tournament that he won with a plus-seven score. And although he 'only equalled' Kasparov's monster score of 1999, his 10 points from 13 games (a 2933 performance) pushed his rating to heights where no one has ever been, 21 points higher than Kasparov's seemingly untouchable peak of 2851, reached in 2000.

One achievement that was not men-



The 75th Tata Steel Chess tournament ended in a sweeping victory for Magnus Carlsen. With seven-league strides the world's number one raced through the jubilee edition to a baffling plus-seven, equalling the record score with which Garry Kasparov demolished the field in his Wijk aan Zee debut in 1999. Carlsen finished one and a half points ahead of fellow-Candidate Levon Aronian and a full two points ahead of World Champion Vishy Anand and Sergey Karjakin. The Norwegian looked back on a clean race: 'I managed to win all the games in which I had an advantage at some point, and to draw all the games in which I was doing badly.' In the process he took his rating to a new all-time high of 2872, leaving Vladimir Kramnik gasping in second place at a 62-point distance. Yet, Carlsen is fully aware that with the long-awaited next big challenge around the corner he should not lose his sense of fear: 'I hope for the Candidates' that my openings will be a little bit better and my general play quite a bit sharper.'

NEW IN CHESS

tioned, probably because he failed to win his last-round game, was the fantastic streak he had had before that day. From the 25 games he played in the second leg of the Grand Slam Final in Bilbao, in the Classic in London and in Wijk aan Zee up to that game, he had gathered a stupendous 20 points (15 wins and 10 draws), a unique feat at this level.

Certainly noteworthy as well was the fact that in all nine previous appearances in Wijk aan Zee, Carlsen had lost at least one game and that this was the first time he remained unbeaten. Even in his sensational debut in the C-Group in 2004, when he scored 10½ from 13(!), he lost one game. The answer to the pub quiz question who was his opponent in that game, is Dusko Pavasovic, the Slovenian GM, who, at 2615, was the top-seed that year. (The answer to the next pub quiz question is: 13-year-old

Magnus Carlsen was still an IM and at 2484 he was the eighth seed.)

Carlsen's 10th consecutive appearance coincided with the 75th anniversary of the greatest chess festival in the world. In the months leading up to the Tata Steel tournament there had been nervous speculation about the future of this unique event. Not without reason, as behind the scenes the organizing committee was fighting hard to keep the tradition alive. Only at the official opening were worries dispelled with the announcement that next year there will be a 76th edition. Wonderful news indeed.

Magnus Carlsen feels that his number one position comes with the responsibility to lead the life of a top professional in which an eye for detail is essential. While contemplating his preparation for Wijk aan Zee he didn't want to repeat the mistake he made last year, when he ran out of steam way before the end and saw his hopes of first place go up in smoke after a loss to Sergey Karjakin in Round 9. His conclusion was that last time his sun holiday before wintry Wijk aan Zee had not been sunny enough. In order to stow enough vitamin D to last 13 long rounds he travelled to Jordan this time. There he prepared physically and mentally in a luxurious resort in the Gulf of Aqaba in the company of his family.

Carlsen's purposeful preparation was in stark contrast with the approach of bottom seed Hou Yifan to her debut in the top group. The former Women's World Champion took five exams at Beijing University, where she is studying International Relations, the last of them one day before she boarded the plane to the Netherlands. Remarkably, she also arrived without a second, because the Chinese chess federation had no one available to accompany her. Instead she relied on her steady companion, her mother Wang Qian, a trained nurse with no specific chess knowledge. In the first rounds Hou Yifan had a rough time, but true to her character she kept fighting for her chances. In the end she won three games and could look back on a satisfactory debut with a 2685 performance.

A good part of Carlsen's success can be attributed to his physical fitness. Even after long and tense games he would get up looking fit as a fiddle and ready for the next fight. On the free days he made sure he didn't miss the football games to let off steam. His fitness and his unusual gift for the game remain the basis of what has become his trademark style. Acknowledging that these days getting an advantage from the opening is well-nigh impossible, as everyone relies on top-notch computers for research, he tries to reach positions in which he is confident that he will outplay his opponents in the middle- or endgame.

> 'And I am entitled to my opinion that he's a grumpy old man.'

His successes have brought him many admirers, but inevitably there are detractors as well. In an interview with Evgeny Surov of chess-news.ru, Evgeny Sveshnikov criticized Carlsen's play, saying that he certainly is a practical player, but that his weakness is the openings. If he doesn't switch to a scientific approach, in the footsteps of people like Polugaevsky and Kasparov, Sveshnikov believes that his 'future doesn't look so promising'.

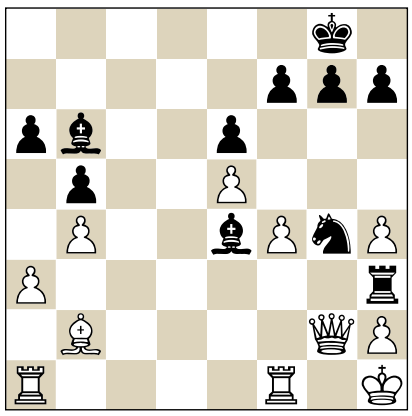
Indeed, you can't please them all! When not so long ago chess preparation began to take on ridiculous proportions, some people predicted the death of the game because 'originality' and 'real chess skills' were playing an ever less prominent role. Now that a new trend has developed thanks to Carlsen and let's not forget Levon Aronian, one would have expected everyone to be happy, as they show that chess continues to be rich with mystery in all phases of the game.

Sveshnikov's words left Carlsen fairly indifferent when he was confronted with them. Shrugging his shoulders, he commented: 'I think everyone is entitled to their opinions. He's entitled to his, that I should have a more traditional approach and that Karjakin has better championship prospects.' And then with a laugh: 'And I am entitled to my opinion that he's a grumpy old man.'

Carlsen's start was hesitant. He drew his first two games and he was lucky to survive a highly suspect position against Aronian. His first win followed in Round 3. With nine decisive games, including four wins, Loek van Wely provided a lot of entertainment in this jubilee edition, but his opening play against the number one led to a quick disaster. Carlsen barely spent any time and after 33 moves Van Wely resigned.

Vishy Anand also scored his first win in Round 3, at the expense of Fabiano Caruana. The World Champion remains highly popular in Wijk aan Zee (he won here for the first time in 1989!) and his early success was welcomed with approval. But these nods and smiles were nothing compared to what happened in Round 4, when Anand composed a masterpiece in his game against Aronian. A game that Carlsen called 'one for the ages'. In a complex Meran, Anand introduced a new concept and followed up with a number of brilliant punches that left everyone in raptures. As Anand was the first to point out in the press conference, the game bore a remarkable resemblance to the legendary attack that Rubinstein conducted against Rotlevi in 1907. Here the answer to the pub quiz question with what dashing move that game ended is: 25...♖h3!

A good part of Magnus Carlsen's success can be attributed to his physical fitness. On the free days he made sure he didn't miss the football games to let off steam. As Carlsen breaks away, another fanatic, Loek van Wely, looks determined to stop the Norwegian.



Rotlevi-Rubinstein
Lodz 1907

And White resigned in view of 26.♖f2 ♗xf2 27.♕xe4 ♖xh2 mate or 26.♖f3 ♗xf3 27.♕xf3 ♖xh2 mate.

Comparing brilliancies from such different eras is a fairly useless exercise. For Rubinstein it was 'easy' to start great complications and emerge victorious, as his opponent was a much weaker player, whereas Anand played the number two player in the world. He had to work out most of his attack at the board, but on the other hand he had studied the concept and knew that the situation was favourable for Black. Maybe we shouldn't enter this discussion and simply enjoy both games for the beauty they offered.

In the shadow of Anand's showpiece, Carlsen won a fine game against Harikrishna, to move into the shared lead. The third leader was Sergey Karjakin, who proved highly efficient against the two Chinese participants. In Round 1 the Russian treated himself to a birthday present by beating Hou Yifan, two days later he also defeated Wang Hao.

This trio remained in the lead in Round 5, when all three drew their games. To everyone's disappointment, the big clash between Anand and Carlsen was a fairly insipid affair for non-chess reasons. Carlsen had been ill during the night and, running a fever, he felt unable to play only one and a half hours before the game. Fortunately, the pills that the tournament doctor provided worked a small miracle, and during the game he was feeling 'a little better'. It must have been the first time in quite some time that the Norwegian arrived at the board aiming to make a draw. The game will not find its way into any games collection, but he achieved his goal. 'It was not so much fun to be playing at 40 per cent of my capacity. I mean, I could calculate variations, but it was just taking very long. That was why I was trying to play something extremely simple and be as safe as possible.'

The next day he was sufficiently recovered to take the sole lead. Ivan Sokolov opted for one of those lesser known Ruy Lopez variations that he has written about so eloquently in *The Ruy Lopez Revisited*, and that he knows so well. Once again the Dutchman proved the validity of his choice and reached a perfectly satisfactory position. But it was not enough. As he describes in his illuminating notes to the game further on, Carlsen kept looking for his chances and found them with microscopic precision.

In the meantime, Levon Aronian was recovering admirably from his loss against Anand. Which perhaps wasn't that remarkable, as such hopeless defeats tend to leave fewer scars than well-played games that are spoiled by a silly blunder. As Aronian put it philosophically: 'It was a great find, it took him a long time, I guess. And even if it took him a short time, it was great homework. It was good that I didn't see this in London.'

Aronian immediately bounced back with wins against Sokolov and Leko. These two wins inspired a great run of 6 out of 7 following his loss to Anand. Much to his chagrin, this run ended after his fine win against Nakamura in Round 11. Aronian felt that he still had chances to repeat his tournament victory of last year, but he only managed two draws in the final two rounds.

Another happy winner in Round 6 was Hou Yifan. Her opponent, Anish Giri, may have felt that the moment had come to play for a win after a protracted series of five draws, but the opposite happened. The Dutch favourite would have to wait till Round 11 for his first and only win. Ironically, his victim was Fabiano Caruana, who fell ill in the final week and played his worst tournament in ages. The Italian has Vladimir Chuchelov as trainer, but could not rely on the services of the Belgian grandmaster in Wijk aan Zee, as Chuchelov accompanied another of his charges there... Anish Giri. The young Dutchman only showed his true potential in the last three rounds, with this win and good draws against Aronian and Carlsen. Said Carlsen: 'I think he's been playing at the level he should be playing in the last three rounds. Maybe he suddenly discovered that the tournament had started.'

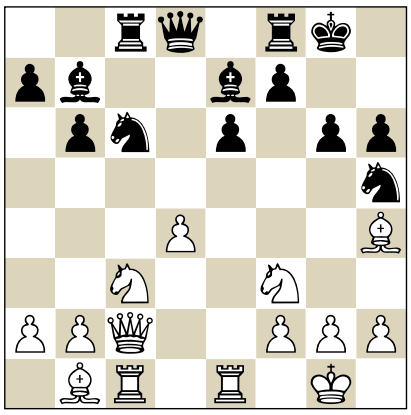
> 'On days when you make 10 positional blunders in a row, you're just doomed to lose and there is no point in trying to explain it.'

And what about Anand? He was doing fine, too. In Round 7 he joined Carlsen in the lead again, when he fairly effortlessly disposed of Van Wely, while his rival had to defend a long endgame against Peter Leko.

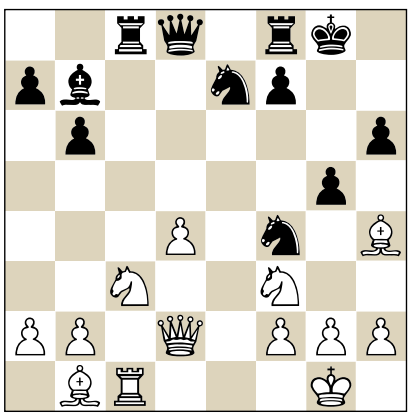
Leko worked hard and showed further progress since his comeback after a one-year break. The Hungarian finished in fifth place and suffered only one loss. In Round 10 he provided a sample of his profound opening preparation that left his opponent Ivan Sokolov speechless.

NI 4.7 – E53
Ivan Sokolov
Peter Leko
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (10)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♗d3 c5 6.♘f3 d5 7.0-0 cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.♗xc4 b6 10.♗g5 ♗b7 11.♖c1 h6 12.♗h4 ♘c6 13.♗d3 ♗e7 14.♗b1 ♖c8 15.♖e1 ♘h5 This, in combination with his next move, is what Leko had prepared for the GP in Tashkent. **16.♕c2 g6**



Now, who wouldn't be tempted to sacrifice his rook on e6, with a white battery aimed at Black's king? **17.♖xe6** Sokolov takes the plunge, not knowing that he has entered a labyrinth of which Leko has the map. **17...♘f4** After this knight jump all the tactics seem to work for Black. **18.♖xe7** Black is also clearly better after 18.♖e4 ♘b4 19.♗xe7 ♘xc2 20.♗xd8 ♗xe4. **18...♘xe7 19.♕d2** 19.♖e1 does not promise White anything after 19...♖e8. **19...g5**



20.♘e5 Leko believed that White's best try was 20.♗g3, even if White would be in deep trouble after 20... ♘eg6 21.♗xg6 fxg6 22.♗xf4 ♖xf4 23.d5 ♕d6. **20...♘eg6 21.♘xg6 fxg6 22.♗g3 ♘xg2 23.♕c2 ♕f6 24.♗e5 ♕f7 25.a3 ♘h4 26.♗a2 ♕xa2** White resigned.

The tournament was essentially decided in Rounds 8 to 10, when Carlsen broke away with a hat-trick that gave him a one and a half point lead over Anand, Aronian and Nakamura.

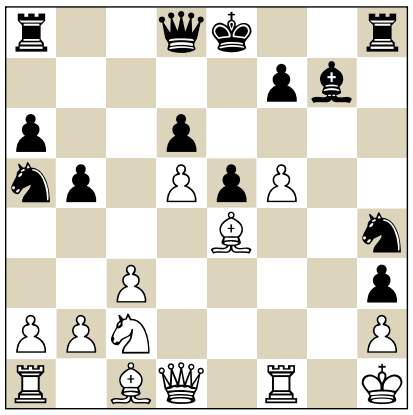
The three wins were vintage Carlsen and two of them are analysed in Jan Timman's column further on. The top-seed was still full of energy, showing no signs of fatigue whatsoever. Typical was his win in Round 8 over Karjakin. Last year his loss against the same opponent in Round 9 had been a first sign that he didn't have the strength to show his best in the final rounds. This time there were no such signs. With endless energy and ingenuity Carlsen fought on in a level endgame and got his reward after 92 moves. As Karjakin, deathly pale, almost stumbled out of the hall, Carlsen got up with a grin, looking as if he could easily have played on for several more hours.

The next day, Carlsen was working late again. All boards in the A- and B-Groups had already been deserted when, on an empty stage, Hou Yifan ceased her resistance after 66 long moves. Together with the 65 moves he needed the next day to beat Erwin l'Ami, Carlsen produced a total of 223 moves in these three decisive rounds, convincing proof that there was nothing wrong with his vitamin D level.

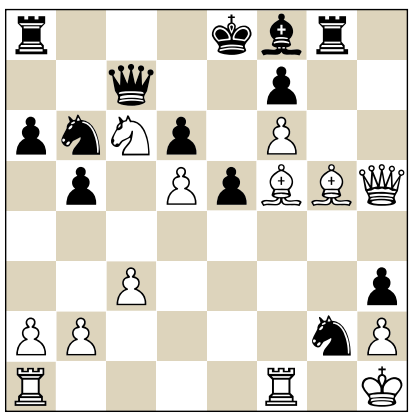
Despite this demonstration of strength, with three rounds to go miracles were still possible, even if they were not very likely to happen. Carlsen had some tricky hurdles left, while Anand in particular had a lighter programme. The miracle didn't happen. Carlsen survived dubious positions against Wang Hao and Giri and clinched tournament victory with one round to spare, when he punished Nakamura's risky play in Round 12.

SI 32.8 – B32
Magnus Carlsen
Hikaru Nakamura
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (12)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.g3 h5 A reasonable move, according to Carlsen. **7.♘1c3 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♘d5 ♘ge7 10.♗g2 ♗g4** He believed 10...♘xd5 11.exd5 ♘e7 was clearly better than what Black got in the game. **11.f3 ♗e6 12.c3 h4 13.♘c2 ♗xd5 14.exd5 ♘a5 15.f4 ♘f5?!** Black should have played 15...hxg3 16.hxg3 ♖xh1+ 17.♗xh1 ♕d7 18.♗g2 exf4 19.♗xf4 ♘g6, although White keeps the chances. **16.g4 h3 17.♗e4 ♘h4 18.0-0 g6 19.♔h1 ♗g7 20.f5 gxf5 21.gxf5**



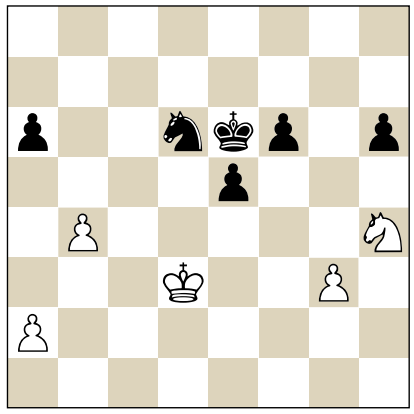
21...♘g2? The decisive mistake. He should have played 21...♗f6, and Black is still in the game. **22.f6! ♗f8** After 22...♗xf6 23.♕f3 ♖h4 24.♗g5 ♖f4 25.♗xf4 ♘xf4 26.b3 it's hard to see Black's compensation for the exchange. **23.♕f3 ♕c7 24.♘b4 ♘b7 25.♘c6 ♘c5 26.♗f5 ♘d7 27.♗g5 ♖g8 28.♕h5 ♘b6**



Time for an elegant finish. **29.♗e6 ♖xg5 30.♕xg5 fxe6 31.dxe6** Black resigned.

Nakamura was understandably upset with yet another loss to Carlsen, but tried to explain it objectively. 'If I play bishop f6 instead of knight g2, it's very difficult to assess the game. A computer would win that position very easily with either colour against one of us. I think overall Magnus just understood the structure a little bit better.' His overall assessment of his result was similar: 'I felt like I played a couple of good games throughout and I was able to convert them, but overall the quality of my play was quite poor. To finish on plus 1 is something of a miracle considering how many bad if not losing positions I had throughout the tournament. I just didn't play well here. But sometimes you just have to have some bad results and learn from them and move on to the next tournament.'

By that time Anand had spoiled his last chances when he failed to convert a winning position in Round 11 against Hou Yifan with a most unusual mistake.



Hou Yifan-Anand
position after 42.b4

42...♘f5 Black was winning after 42...h5 43.a4 ♔d5. Anand thinks that he is simplifying his task by exchanging the knights, but makes an uncharacteristic calculating error. **43.♘xf5 ♔xf5 44.a4** And now he must have realized to his horror that the pawn ending is drawn. While the black king has to control the white pawns on the queenside, the white king has no problem doing the same on the rest of the board. **44...♔e6 45.g4 ♔d5 46.♔c3 ♔e4 47.♔c2 ♔d4 48.♔b3 e4 49.b5 axb5 50.axb5 e3 51.♔c2 ♔e4 52.♔d1 ♔d5** Draw.

Hikaru Nakamura: 'Sometimes you just have to have some bad results and learn from them and move on to the next tournament.'

NEW IN CHESS

Wijk aan Zee A 2013 **cat. XX**

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		TPR
1	Magnus Carlsen	IGM NOR 2861	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	10	2933
2	Levon Aronian	IGM ARM 2802	½	*	0	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	8½	2836
3	Vishy Anand	IGM IND 2772	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	½	8	2815
4	Sergey Karjakin	IGM RUS 2780	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	8	2815
5	Peter Leko	IGM HUN 2735	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	7½	2788
6	Hikaru Nakamura	IGM USA 2769	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	7	2758
7	Pentala Harikrishna	IGM IND 2698	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	1	½	1	0	½	½	½	6½	2734
8	Anish Giri	IGM NED 2720	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	½	0	1	½	½	6	2703
9	Wang Hao	IGM CHN 2752	½	0	1	0	½	0	½	½	*	0	1	½	1	½	6	2701
10	Loek van Wely	IGM NED 2679	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	*	½	1	1	1	6	2707
11	Hou Yifan	IGM CHN 2603	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	1	0	½	*	½	½	1	5½	2684
12	Fabiano Caruana	IGM ITA 2781	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	*	1	1	5	2641
13	Erwin l' Ami	IGM NED 2627	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	0	*	½	4	2599
14	Ivan Sokolov	IGM NED 2663	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	0	½	*	3	2526

On the final day Anand's fate was even worse. Against Wang Hao he suffered his first loss in the tournament, leaving Carlsen as the only undefeated player. Anand was at a loss about his play on the final day: 'Every once in a while I play a game that I cannot explain in any logical way. I mean, on days when you make 10 positional blunders in a row, you're just doomed to lose and there is no point in trying to explain it. If not for this game, it would still be a nice event. Well, what can I say? I spoilt it. But still overall I will go with some positive feelings. Plus 3 is different from what I was doing for a while. But it's unfinished somehow...'

Levon Aronian was also in a sombre mood after his last game, blaming himself for letting Caruana escape with a draw from a totally lost position. Still, the half point he was left with was good enough for sole second place. His conclusion was also one of mixed emotions: 'I'd been looking forward to finally playing again after London. I was so eager to play. Chess is the kind of game that after you played a bad tournament you really want to play. The next day! That's what I felt, and even though I started slowly I still could tell that I was playing well. This was a tournament of missed opportunities. I think I could have scored more points. But there are never excuses, I don't like using them. I should pay attention to that, to keep my concentration.'

Inevitably, he also saw his performance in light of the upcoming Candidates' tournament. 'Yeah, I thought about it, 2012 was a different year. I was trying to play more aggressively, pushing for my limits. This year I've decided to return to my usual self, you know. Playing and attempting to satisfy my positional sense. Not pushing into all kinds of tactics, trying to get rid of my hot-headedness. It was a good tournament, with the exception of the game against Anand. In all other games I had reasonable positions and I could have scored more points. I look at the future and I think, this is the moment to show what I've got.'

Sergey Karjakin, who shared third place with Anand, was the fourth player to go through the tournament with only one loss. Despite this loss against Carlsen, Karjakin was not in the mood to complain. 'Basically, I am quite satisfied, because I had a few bad games. Against Aronian I was completely lost and I was lucky to escape. With such luck plus three is quite a good result.' To which he added laughing: 'In 2009 I also scored plus 3 and I was clear first!'

And easily happiest, of course, was Magnus Carlsen. Immediately after the last round he could not suppress his annoyance about his play on the final day, which had kept him from breaking Kasparov's record, but quite soon he admitted that in a couple of days' time that nagging voice inside would shut up and allow him to enjoy this win for what it is. Perhaps as his finest victory ever, although he probably still rates his stellar performance in Nanjing 2009, where he scored 8 out of 10 (TPR 3002) and crossed the 2800 barrier, a little bit higher: 'That was kind of my breakthrough and I also was a much weaker player then than I am now.'

After London you said it was time to take your game to another level. Did we see any of that here?

'No. I did pretty much the same as I did in London and Bilbao. I just think it sometimes is going to net me plus 3, plus 4, and sometimes plus 6, plus 7.'

And taking it to another level would be more perfectionist.

'Yes.'

The Candidates' tournament would be a good occasion then. Were you hiding anything here?

'Yeah, you know... partly, but it was just about... Especially some of the positions I got with black, they were not necessarily bad, but I was not so familiar with them and I misplayed them pretty early on. So then the games became something of an uphill struggle. I thought with white my openings were fine. I don't expect to get too much of an advantage, but I got a lot of good fighting positions.'

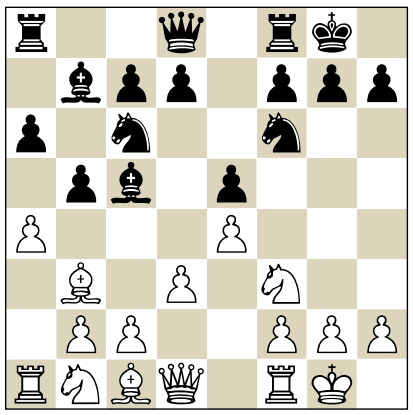
I think one of the problems you have now is that you played so well in the past tournaments, that it might affect your sense of fear. Is that something you worry about yourself?

'Yeah, maybe a little bit. I mean, I am kind of used to that, whenever I get a slightly better position, I almost always win. And when I am slightly worse, I never have any problems holding it, so ... Right now I am close to where I need to be, but not right there. I hope for the Candidates' that my openings will be a little bit better and my general play quite a bit sharper and then I am going to be right there.'

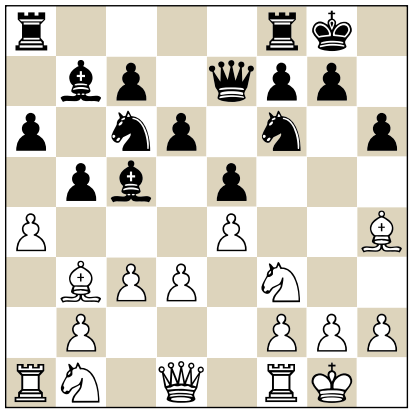
NOTES BY
Magnus Carlsen

RL 12.9 – C78
Magnus Carlsen
Ivan Sokolov
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (6)

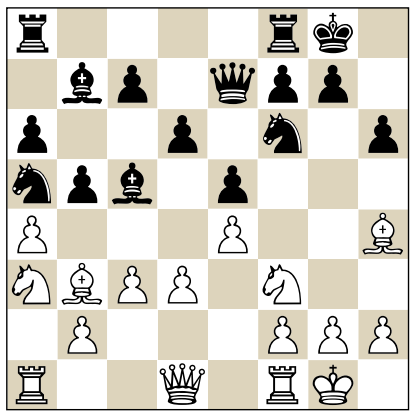
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♗b7 7.d3 ♗c5 8.a4 0-0



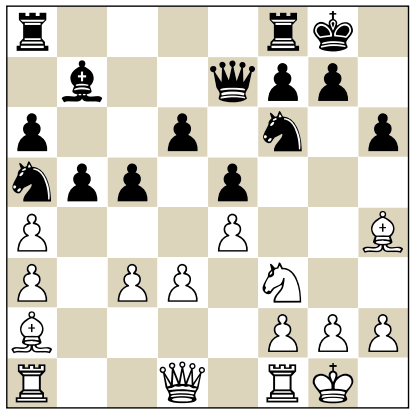
9.♗g5
The complications that arise after 9.♘c3 ♘a5 have worked well for Black, as far as I know. The text is a more positional approach, aiming for a slight advantage.
9...h6 10.♗h4 d6 11.c3 ♕e7



Ivan went for this after a bit of thought. I assumed the plan was to go ...♘d8-e6 at some point, while staying flexible and keeping the option of going ...g5 at the appropriate juncture.
12.♘a3
This is just awful, especially in combination with my next move.
12.♘bd2 would have been the sane choice. 12.♔h1 was played in one of the three games that reached this position. It probably makes more sense than what I did.
12...♘a5 Of course.

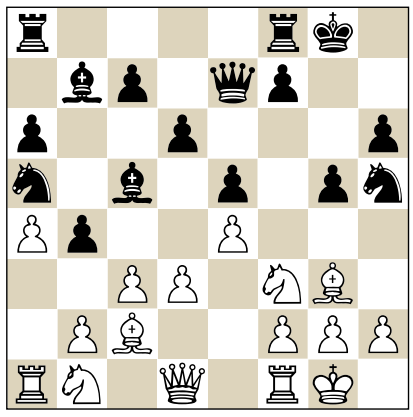


13.♗c2 I had assumed that 13.axb5 ♘xb3 14.♕xb3 would work out for me, but Black actually has several good options here, including the simple 14...♖fb8 15.♕c2 (15.bxa6 ♗xe4 16.♕d1 ♗xf3 17.♕xf3 g5 18.b4 ♗b6 and 19...♖xa6) 15...♗xa3 16.♖xa3 axb5, and Black is absolutely fine.
13.♗a2 was another option, but after the simple 13...♗xa3 14.bxa3 c5

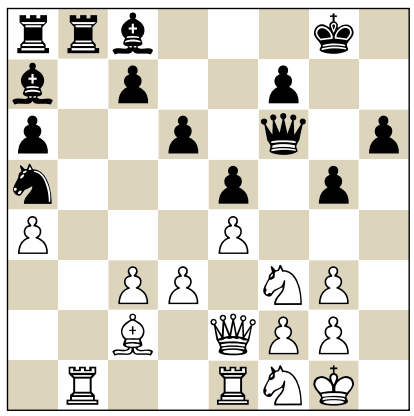


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

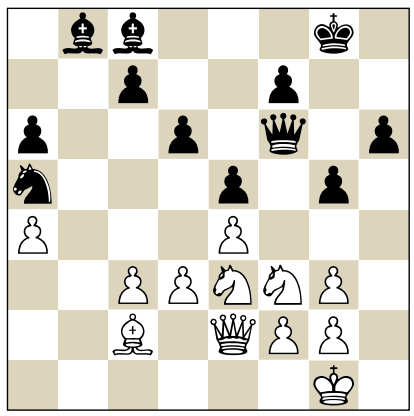
it appeared to me that Black, with ...c4 coming up, would have too easy a game, so I decided to keep the tension at the expense of two tempi.
13...b4 14.♘b1 g5 15.♗g3 ♘h5



Obviously, Black is doing well now. However, the white position still has some long-term potential, especially based on the potentially offside position of the knight on a5 (spoiler alert: it failed to make another move in the game).
16.♘bd2 ♗a7 17.♖e1 bxc3 18.bxc3 ♘xg3 19.hxg3 ♕f6 20.♕e2 ♖fb8 21.♖ab1 ♗c8 22.♘f1
It seems that White is not really worse here, but it was only after the next move that I really started hoping for something more.

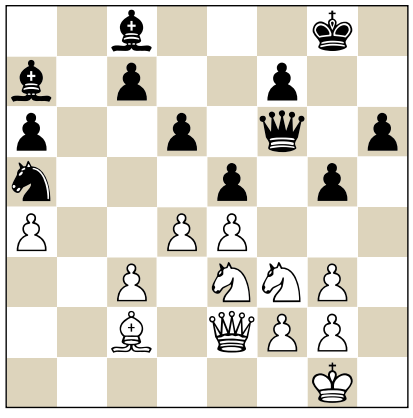


22...♖xb1
In slight time-pressure, Ivan decided to simplify. However, the double rook exchange loses crucial time, allowing me to get in ♘e3 and d4.
22...♗e6, or most other sensible moves, would have been absolutely fine.
23.♖xb1 ♖b8 24.♖xb8 ♗xb8 25.♘e3

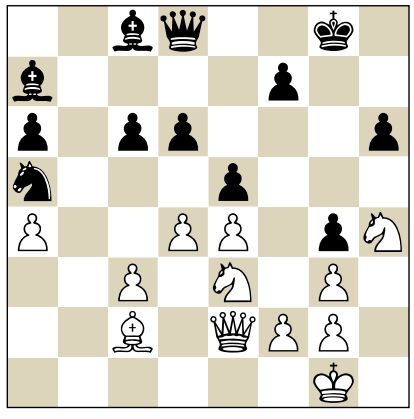


25...♗a7
25...♘c6 26.♘h2 with ♘g4 to come would also have been unpleasant.
26.d4

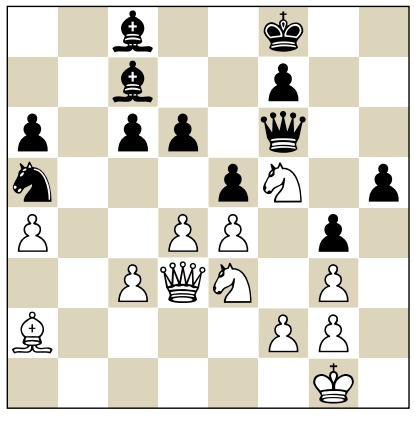
This is the point. I have time to develop an initiative before he can bring the knight and bishop back into play.



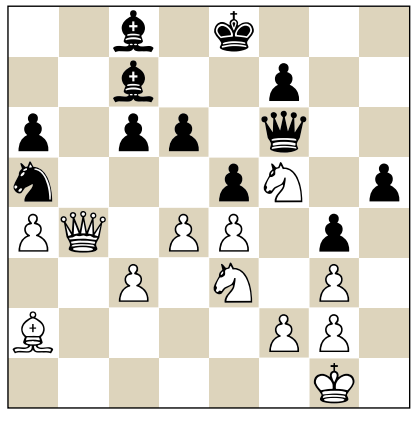
26...g4
This just allows the second knight to jump in.
26...exd4 27.cxd4 ♗xd4 28.♘d5 is no good either, but 26...c6 would still have been reasonably solid.
27.♘d5 ♕d8 28.♘h4 c6
28...exd4 29.♘f5 spells disaster for Black.
29.♘e3



29...h5 29...exd4 30.♘hf5 is similar to the previous note.
30.♘hf5 ♕f6 31.♕d3 ♗b6 32. ♗b1 ♔f8 33.♗a2 ♗c7



I've achieved everything I wanted, but it's still not easy to break through, as attempts to play on the kingside with f3 or f4 did not appear convincing at all. I decided that I probably needed to attack a6 somehow, possibly after including d5, ...c5.
34.♕b1 ♔e8 35.♕b4



Now the bishop is going to d3, and the queen to e2 or f1.
35...d5
A tempting move, especially in time-trouble, but now the centralized white pieces will rule. However, pas-

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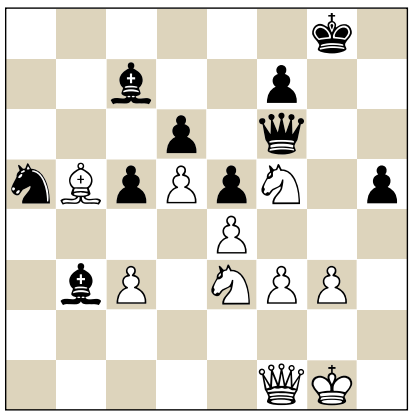
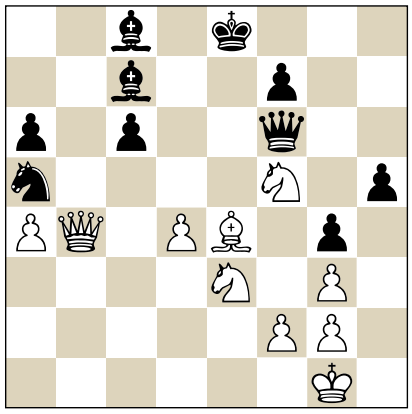
sive defending was also unpromising, for instance 35...♔f8 36.♗b1 ♔e8 37.♗d3 ♔f8 38.♕b1 ♔g8 39.d5 c5 40.♕f1 ♗d7 41.♗xa6 ♗xa4 42.♗b5 ♗b3 43.f3 gxf3 44.gxf3,



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

and with all the minor pieces stranded on the queenside, the black kingside is helpless.

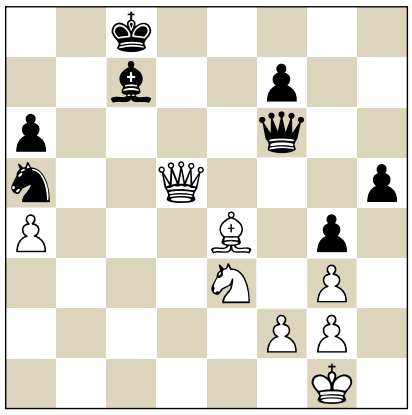
36.♗b1 exd4 37.cxd4 dxe4 38.♗xe4



38...♗e6

This loses, but it is hard to suggest anything better.

39.♕c5 ♔d7 40.d5 cxd5 41.♘xd5 ♗xd5 42.♕xd5+ ♔c8 43.♘e3

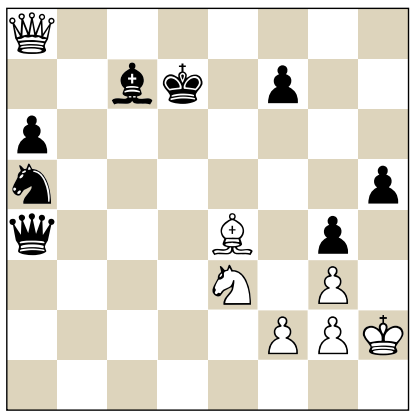


Materially speaking, we're still equal, but the difference in activity and king safety is simply too huge.

43...♕a1+ 44.♔h2 ♕xa4

Here 44...h4 was the one move I needed to calculate. However, it is not too hard to see that after 45.♕a8+ ♔d7 46.♗f5+ ♔e7 47.♘d5+ ♔d6 48.♘xc7 hxg3+ 49.fxg3 ♔xc7 50.♕c8+ ♔b6 51.♕d8+ ♔a7 52.♕xa5 ♕h8+ 53.♔g1 ♕d4+ 54.♔f1 White easily escapes the checks and wins.

45.♕a8+ ♔d7



46.♘d5

This one is just lazy. I played it fairly quickly, assuming that 46...♗d8, which he did in fact play, was the only move.

NEW IN CHESS

His third win in Wijk aan Zee, plus 7, undefeated, a new Elo record... What more could Magnus Carlsen and his manager Espen Agdestein have hoped for?

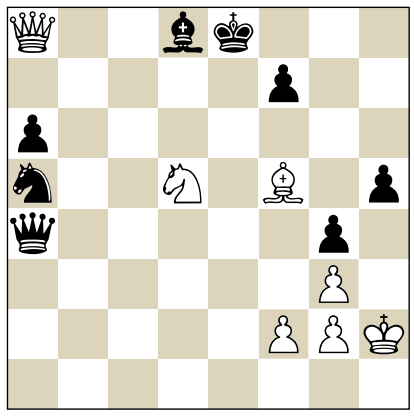
I should have gone 46.♗f5+ ♔e7 47.♕a7 ♕c6 48.♕d4. Centralization! The threat of ♘d5 is lethal.

46...♗d8

Now 46...♕c6 would have allowed Black to fight on for a while, as there is no clear-cut win: 47.♕h8 ♕e6 48.♕xh5 ♔d6.

And 46...♕d4 47.♕f8 ♕e5 48.♕xf7+ ♔c6 49.♘f6+ ♔b5 50.♗d3+ ♔c6 51.♘xh5 would also have prolonged the fight.

47.♗f5+ ♔e8



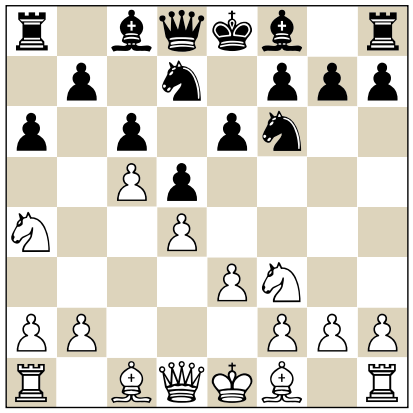
48.♕c8

This one he had evidently missed. There is no defence to ♗d7+ followed by ♘f6+, so he resigned.

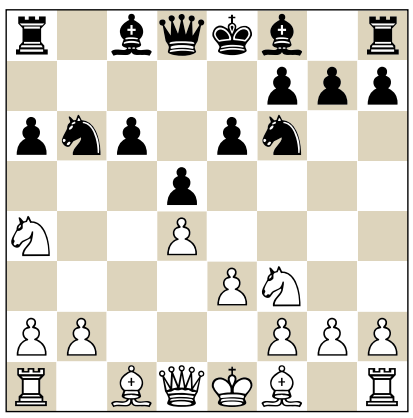
NOTES BY
Levon Aronian

SL 8.1 – D45
Hikaru Nakamura
Levon Aronian
Wijk aan Zee (11) 2013

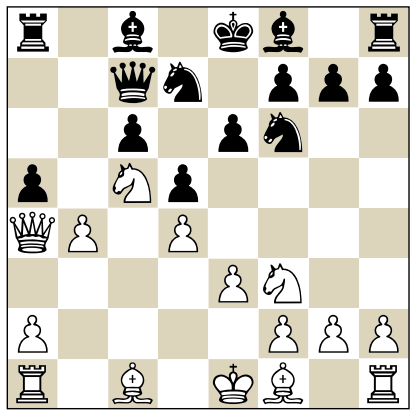
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 a6
On seeing this move, as Vishy strolled past he approvingly nodded his head.
6.c5 ♘bd7 7.♘a4
When Hikaru stopped to think, I began to suspect that he wanted to remember the details of the very crafty variation 7.♕c2 with which Gelfand forced Anand to change opening in their world championship match! Fortunately, this didn't happen.



7...b5 It would be interesting to try 7...e5. With the move in the game I transpose into a known theoretical position which can arise if instead of 6...♘bd7 Black plays 6...b6.
8.cxb6 ♘xb6 Now the question is whether or not Black can get rid of his weak c6-pawn by advancing it.

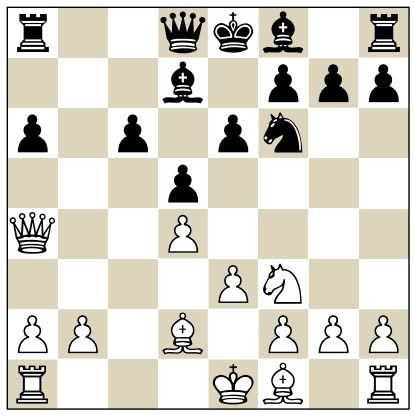


9.♗d2
Strangely enough, the seemingly blockading move 9.♘c5 merely helps Black to carry out the freeing move ...c5. After 9...♘bd7 the exchange of knights merely develops Black, the retreat of the knight allows ...c5, and it is very risky to play 10.b4 on account of 10...a5 11.♕a4 ♕c7.

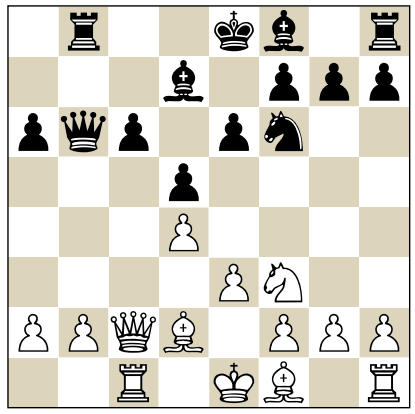


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

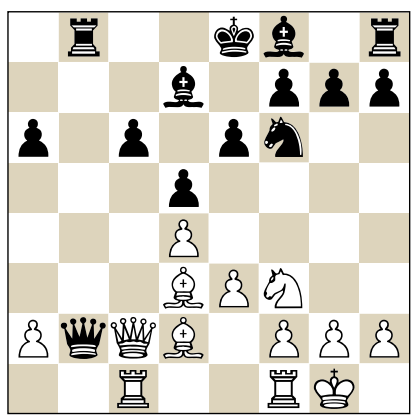
After this Black successively plays ...♘b6, captures on b4 and again plays ...♘bd7, lifting the blockade and obtaining play against the sickly a2-pawn.
9...♘xa4 10.♕xa4 ♗d7



In this straightforward way the maestro Rudolf Spielmann was defeated by Mr. Van den Bosch back in 1936!
11.♕c2
After 11.♘e5 c5 12.♘xd7 ♕xd7 13.♕xd7+ ♔xd7 the endgame is considered harmless for Black.
11...♕b6
11...♘e4 12.♗d3 ♘xd2 13.♘xd2 a5 is more correct. Now 14.♘b3 is unfavourable for White on account of 14...a4 15.♘c5 ♕a5+ 16.♔e2 ♗xc5, and after he captures on c5 he has a weak b2-pawn and Black occupies the centre with his pawns. After other developing moves Black plays 14...a4 and the knight can no longer comfortably reach the blockading square c5.
12.♖c1
To be honest, the move 11...♕b6 was made in the hope of this tempting, but not the best move.
After 12.♘e5 c5 13.dxc5 ♗xc5 14.♖c1 ♗b4 15.♘xd7 ♘xd7 16.♗e2 the position is close to equal, but it is easier for White to play.
12...♖b8



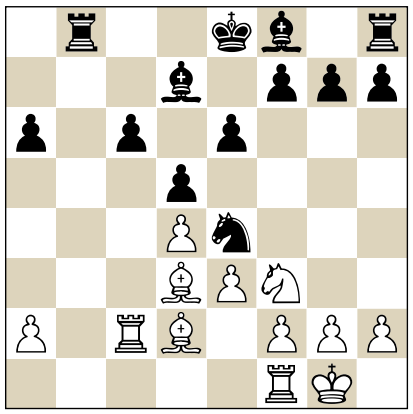
13.♗d3
After the more restrained 13.♘e5 ♘e4 14.♘d3 f6 15.♗e2 ♗d6 Black has the freer game, but the position remains equal.
It should be mentioned that 13.♗c3 is strategically incorrect, since after 13...♘e4 14.♗d3 ♘xc3 15.bxc3 ♗a3 Black controls the b-file and has the initiative.
13...♕xb2 14.0-0
An inaccuracy. In the event of the correct 14.♘e5 ♕xc2 15.♖xc2 ♗d6 16.♗xa6 ♘e4 Black's position is slightly more pleasant, but with correct play by White the draw is not far off.



14...♗d6

Levon Aronian: 'I was very surprised when I learned that certain computer programs, many well-known commentators, and also chess fans whom I know, judged this position to be equal.'

Since the position after 15.♘e5 suited me, I did not begin looking for any alternatives. Serious consideration should have been given to the attempt to advantageously exchange one of the white bishops by 14...♕xc2 15.♖xc2 ♘e4.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

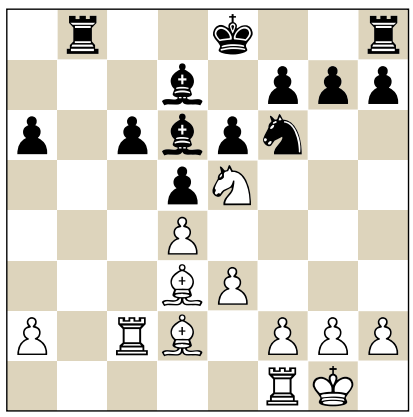
The evaluation of this critical continuation depends on the evaluation of the endgame with opposite-coloured bishops arising after the possible 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.♘e5 f6 18.♘xc6 ♖c8 19.♘b4 ♖xc2 20.♘xc2 ♗b5 21.♖c1 ♔d7 22.♗a5 ♗d6 23.♘a1 ♖c8 24.♖xc8 ♔xc8 25.♘b3 ♗c4 26.♘c5 ♗xc5 27.dxc5 ♗xa2 28.c6. I have the feeling that it is a draw.

To be fair, it should be mentioned that if I had had the sense to see that after 14...♗d6 15.♗c3 White equalizes, I would of course have played 14...♕xc2.

15.♘e5

This pseudo-active move leads to an unpleasant position for White. He had the strong move 15.♗c3, with the idea of preparing the knight jump to e5. Black should continue 15...♕xc2 16.♖xc2 ♘e4, but the position after 17.♗xe4 dxe4 18.♘d2 f5 19.♘c4 is very close to equality thanks to the wonderful knight on c4.

15...♕xc2 16.♖xc2

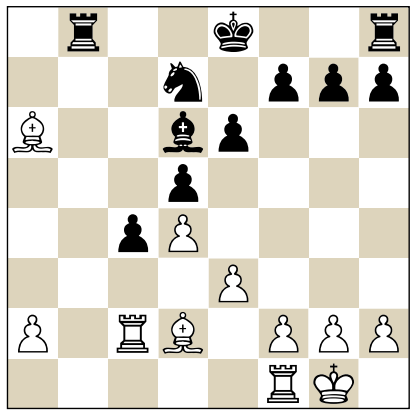


16...c5 In this set-up it is always pleasant to be able to play ...c5 in comfort.

17.♘xd7 ♘xd7 18.♗xa6

After 18.dxc5 ♘xc5 19.♗e2 White has excellent chances of a draw, and if I had been in his place I would definitely have played this.

18...c4



19.a4

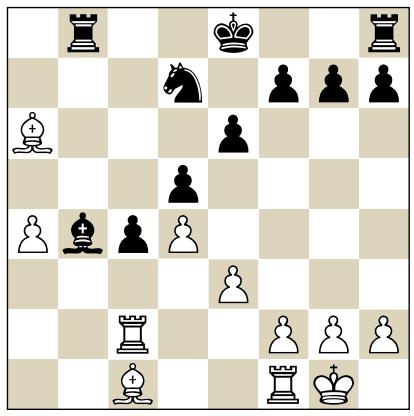
The problem for White is that he has no plan which can do much to improve his passive position. In our times there are not many elite players who have the ability to defend patiently. Of the best experts, the names of Kramnik and Gelfand come to mind.

19...♗b4

It was also possible to play differently, 19...♖b3 for example, but on seeing a good plan for strengthening my position I decided to act.

20.♗c1

Of course, it would be a mistake to allow Black to exchange bishops, since White's chief hope is the e4 break, and without the dark-squared bishops the black king and rooks would have too many comfortable squares.



20...♘f6

After thinking for quite a long time, I decided not to play ...f5. Of course,

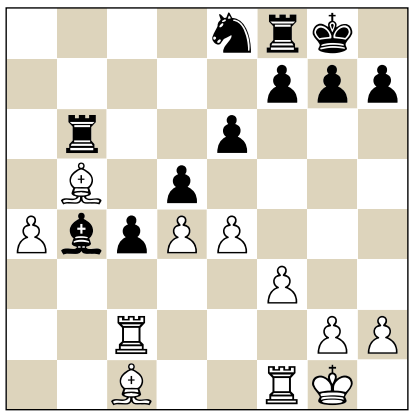
it is pleasant to exclude completely any activity, but by playing ...f5 Black also commits himself to taking every measure to guard against the e4 break, since after the weakening of the central squares by ...f5, he does not want to allow e4. In the game I decided to give my pieces more freedom. With the move in the game the knight is switched via e8 to d6 or c7.

21.f3 0-0

It was also possible to play with the king in the centre, but I wanted to safeguard the king against possible checks and surprises.

22.e4 ♘e8 23.♗b5 ♖b6

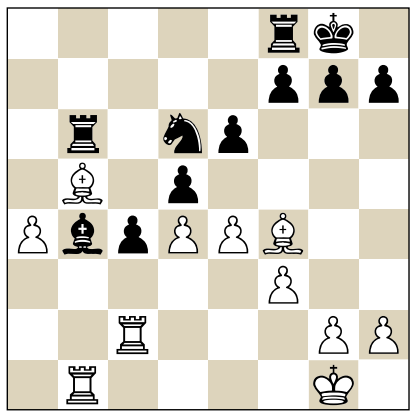
Just in case, depriving the light-squared bishop of the c6-square.



24.♗f4

I was very surprised when I learned after the game that certain computer programs, many well-known commentators, and also chess fans whom I know, judged this position to be equal. When after the game Hikaru and I exchanged opinions about the position after 18…c4, we both considered that White had insuperable difficulties.

24...♘d6 25.♖b1



Important for the evaluation of the position is the exchange on d6. I was intending to capture with the rook and then play ...f6 and ...♗a5. If White succeeds in playing e5 and defending his pawn chain, it will be a draw. Apparently my opponent, like myself, decided that this was not realistic.

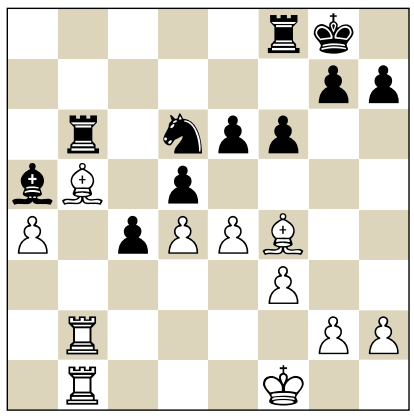
25...♗a5 26.♔f1

There is little difference between this move and 26.♔f2.

26...f6

Black also needs to bring up his king.

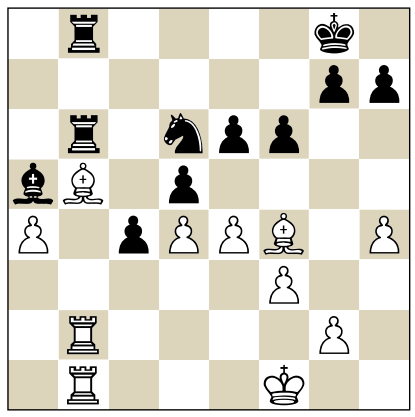
27.♖cb2 An invitation move, typical of my resourceful opponent.



27...♖fb8 I decided not to deviate from my plan, and I even refused to assess the consequences of 27...♗c3.

28.h4

After this move I thought for a long time and began reproaching myself for not having seized space with 27…g5.



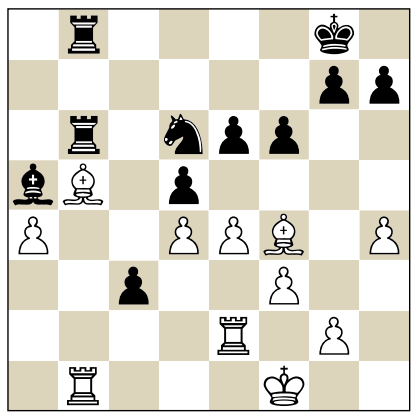
28...c3

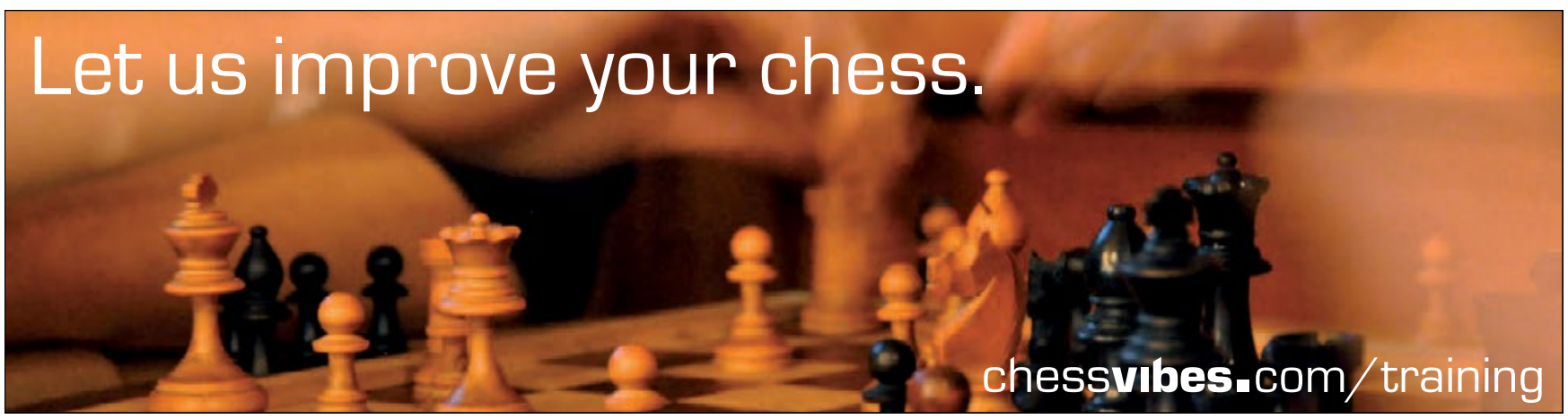
To be honest, this is a blunder, but the reader will see that in this game we blundered jointly.

29.♖e2

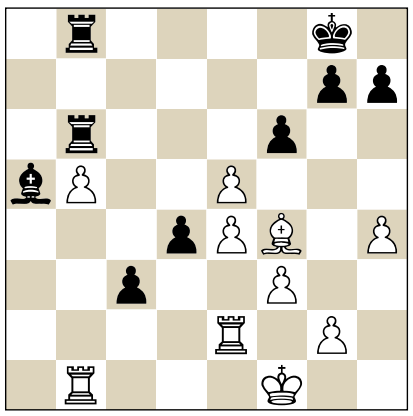
This move allows Black to carry out his plan. We both missed the fact that after 29.♖b3 dxe4 White has the pretty move 30.♗d7, which leads to a draw.

It is obvious that the simple 28...♖8b7 would have retained all the advantages of Black's position.

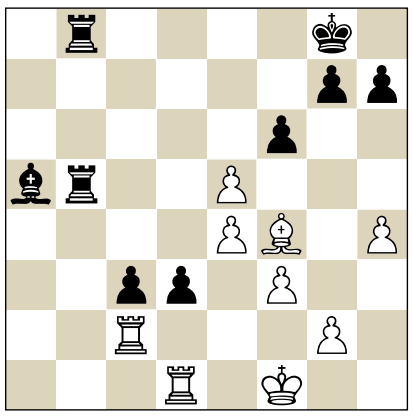




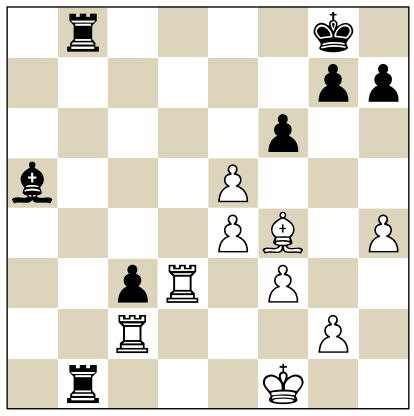
29...e5
Hikaru overlooked this resource. The black pawns unexpectedly support the advance of the c3-pawn.
30.dxe5
However dismal it may seem, instead of the text-move White should have reconciled himself to the loss of the b5-pawn after 30.♗e3.
30...♘xb5 31.axb5 d4



32.♖d1
The most resilient defence. It is easy to see that if White allows the exchange of one pair of rooks, there will be no way of stopping the d- and c-pawns.
32...♖xb5 33.♖c2 d3



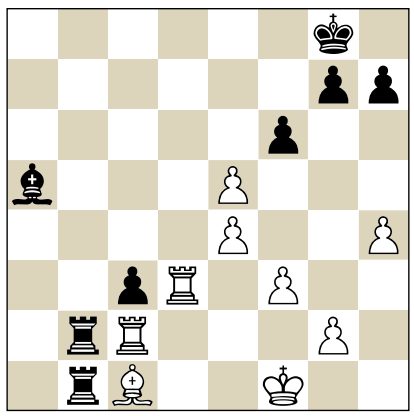
I thought over this 'improvement' for about 10 minutes.
At this point at least five moves would have led to an easy win. The least exotic way was 33...fxe5 34.♗c1 ♖b1, with the idea of ...♖a1/...♖bb1, and then by combining the threat of ...♗b4-a3 or the march of the king to d3 Black easily overcomes the resistance.
34.♖xd3 ♖b1+



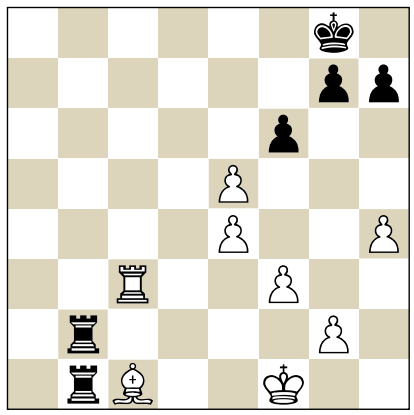
35.♗c1
To my considerable surprise, after the game I learned that my 'petite combinaison' on the 33rd move would have practically led to a draw after 35.♔f2 ♖8b2 (a move which I thought won me a rook) 36.♖e2.

> 'The moral of this story is simple: don't look for a pretty solution in a winning situation, if you can't calculate two moves ahead!'

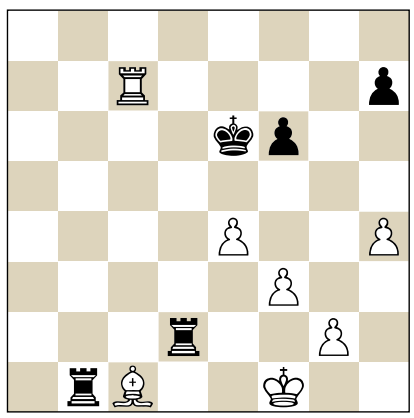
The moral of this story is simple: don't look for a pretty solution in a winning situation, if you can't calculate two moves ahead!
35...♖8b2



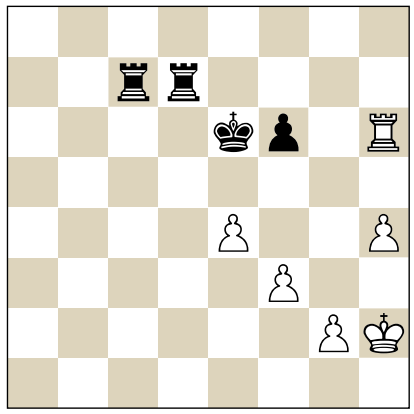
I am pleased to report that, beginning with this move, I did not make any more mistakes to the end of the game.
36.♖cxc3 ♗xc3 37.♖xc3



37...♖d2 37...♖a2 or 37...♖a1 was equally good. **38.♖c8+** 38.e6 ♔f8 does not change anything. **38...♔f7 39.♖c7+ ♔e6 40.exf6 gxf6**



41.♔g1 41.♔e1 ♖xg2 was equally hopeless. With his king cut off there is no way for White to save the game.
41...♖d1+ 42.♔h2 ♖bxc1 43.♖xh7 ♖d7 44.♖h6 ♖cc7



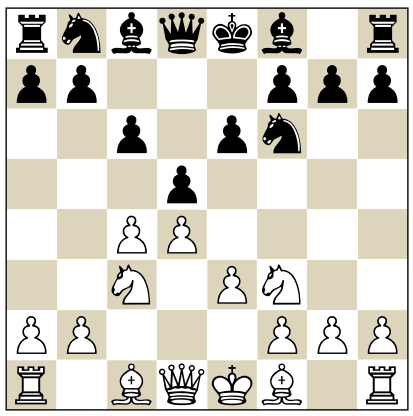
After the exchange of rooks the white pawns are lost because of zugzwang.
45.♖h8 ♖h7 46.♖e8+ ♔f7 47.♖a8 ♖xh4+ 48.♔g3 ♖h1
White resigned.

NOTES BY
Vishy Anand

SL 9.2 – D46
Levon Aronian
Vishy Anand
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (4)

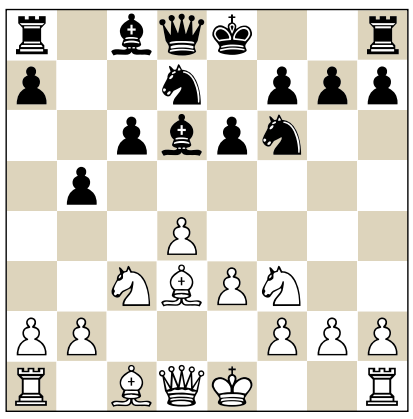
This game was played in Round 4. So far my tournament had gone very well, with my third-round win over Caruana.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.e3



Levon has done a bit of everything against the Meran, and every time he makes a choice at the board you have to think, 'Ah, so what do I want against this?'

5...♘bd7 6.♗d3 dxc4 7.♗xc4 b5 8.♗d3 ♗d6



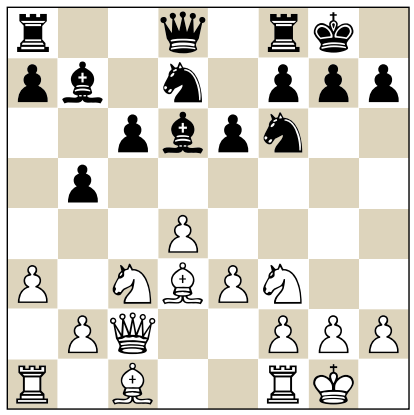
By the time we got this far I had the feeling we might be moving towards the line that would arise shortly.

9.0-0 0-0 10.♕c2

This is the main move here.

10...♗b7 11.a3

And this, too, is the main move. You can also play 11.e4 e5 12.h3 or 11.h3 immediately, or other moves.



11...♖c8

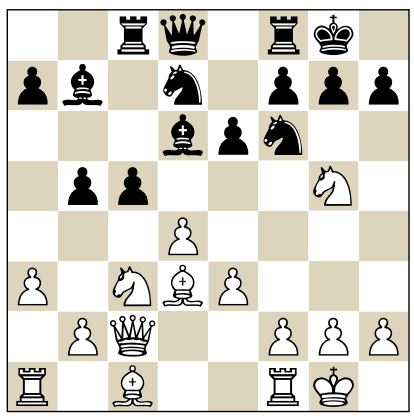
And now I was happy to play this, because I had this big idea. 11...♖c8 in itself should not be a shocker, because Kasimdzhanov already used it against Topalov in the Grand Prix in London. That game saw 12.b4 c5 13.bxc5 ♗xf3 14.gxf3 ♘xc5 15.dxc5 ♖xc5 16.f4 ♘d5 17.♗b2 ♘xc3 18.♗xc3 ♕c7 19.♖fc1 ♖c8 20.♗xh7+ ♔h8 21.♗d3 ♖xc3 22.♕xc3 ♕xc3 23.♖xc3 ♖xc3 24.♗xb5 ♗xa3 25.♔g2 g6 26.♖d1 ♖c7 27.♖d7 ♖xd7 28.♗xd7 ♔g7 29.e4 ♔f6 30.♔f3 a5 31.e5+ ♔e7 32.♗a4 ♗c5 33.h3 ♗b6 34.♗b5 ♗c5 35.♗a4 ♗b6 36.♗b5 ♗c5 37.♗a4 draw.

12.♘g5

At first sight this seems more logical. If instead of 11...♖c8 I had played 11...a6, then 12.♘g5 is an important line there. And if I continued 12...♗xh2+ then I'd rather have the pawn on a6 than the rook on c8. But the advantage of 11...♖c8 is that I can now play:

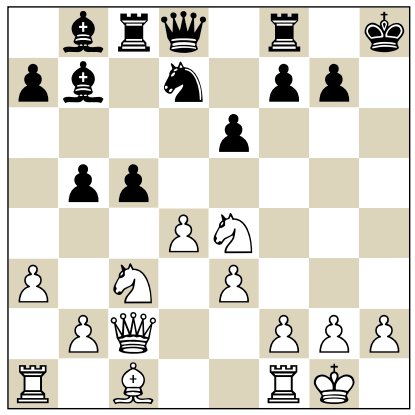
12...c5!

The point of 11...♖c8, and easy to miss. Black ignores White's move.



13.♘xh7

After 13.♗xh7+ ♔h8 14.♗e4 ♘xe4 15.♘gxe4 ♗b8 Black has good compensation.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

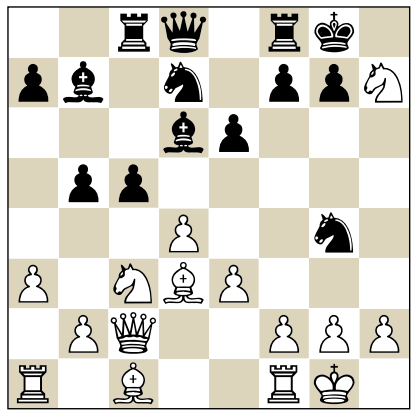
Either I take on d4 and you have an isolated pawn there, or he takes on c5 and you have two bishops staring at his kingside, plus a rook ready to swing over to the kingside. That's a helluva lot for a pawn. Plus you have drawing mechanisms like 16.♘xc5 ♗xh2+ 17.♔xh2 ♕h4+ 18.♔g1 ♗xg2.

After 13.dxc5 Black takes with the rook, 13...♖xc5, and once he frees himself, his play is quite easy.

Finally, in case of 13.♘xb5, 13...♗xh2+ now works: 14.♔xh2 ♘g4+ 15.♔g1 ♕xg5, as White's kingside is much more exposed, because my light-squared bishop is not staring at a pawn on c6, but it's actually staring at g2, and after 16.f3 Black plays 16...cxd4, with a clear advantage.

13...♘g4

This, too, was more or less prep.



14.f4

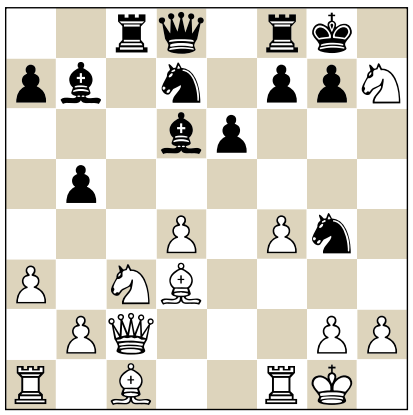
After 14.h3 I remembered 14...♗h2+! (on 14...♕h4 15.f4 is strong) 15.♔h1 ♕h4, with good compen-

Vishy Anand: 'It would be silly to pretend that I didn't find this game incredibly beautiful, especially to play. I am quite proud of it.'

sation for Black both after 16.♗e4 ♗xe4 17.♕xe4 f5 18.♕xe6+ ♔xh7 19.♕xd7 cxd4 20.exd4 ♗b8 21.♔g1 ♗h2+ 22.♔h1 and the bishop goes back to b8 and you repeat, and 16.d5 ♖fd8.

However, after 14.f4 I couldn't remember all the details.

14...cxd4 15.exd4

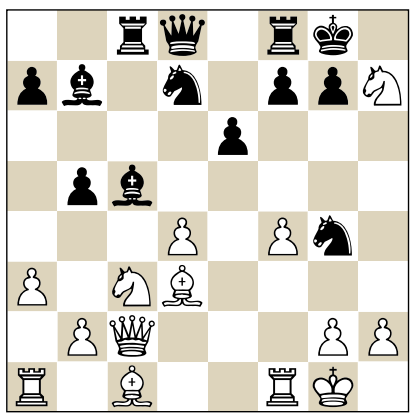


Here I spent about half an hour trying to remember what exactly Black was supposed to do. But of course it's a big help if you know that basically Black is OK. That bit is clear; you just have to figure out how. And I remembered a line in which I got a knight to d3 and from this I figured out that the right move had to be 15...♗c5! So it was my prep, but I worked it out at the board again.

For the sake of completeness, taking the exchange with 15.♘xf8 would give Black excellent compensation after 15...♗xf8 16.h3 dxc3 17.hxg4 ♘f6.

15...♗c5!

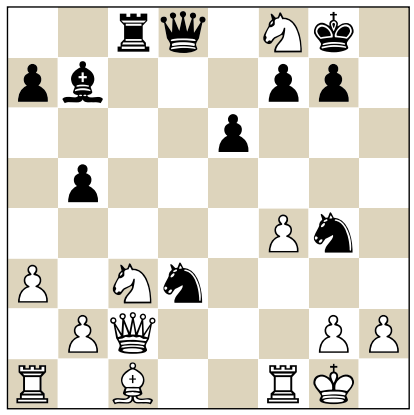
As you may have noticed, after 15...♕h4 White could have transposed to the first comment between brackets after White's 14th move (the one in which Black doesn't interpolate 14...♗h2+!) 16.h3.



16.♗e2

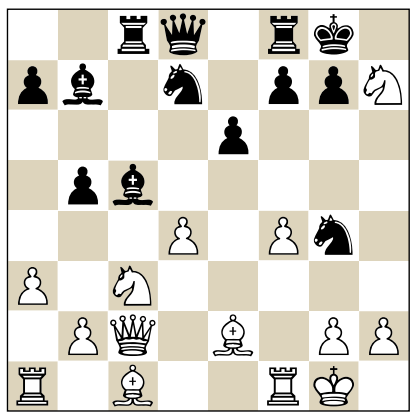
This is actually a mistake. But at the board everything looks scary and unlike me he didn't know that White's position was good.

After 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♘xf8 ♘xd3 I get my knight to d3, but he manages to free his pieces:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

18.h3 ♕d4+ 19.♔h1 ♘df2+ 20.♖xf2 ♘xf2+ 21.♔h2 ♔xf8 22.♕h7 ♘d3 23.♕h8+ ♔e7 24.♕h4+ f6 25.♕g3 ♔f7 26.♗e3, and this should end in a draw.

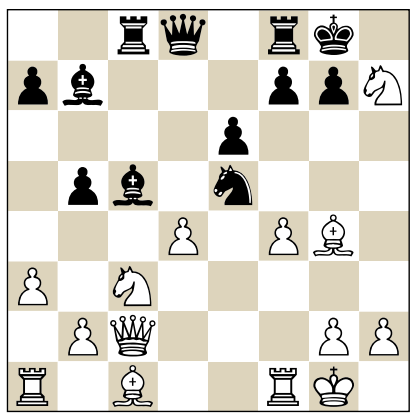


16...♘de5!!

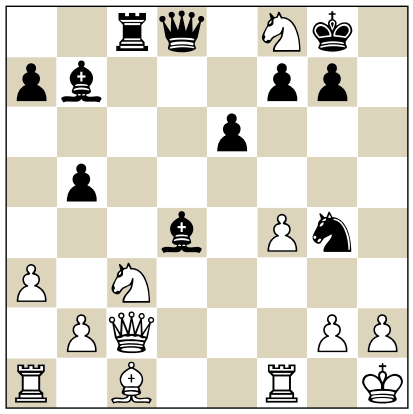
Found after a little bit of effort. It's obviously important to start in this order. As 16...♗xd4+ 17.♔h1 ♘xh2 (17...♘de5 18.fxe5) runs into 18.♘g5!. And, to be honest, once you see the right ideas, the rest of the game plays itself.

17.♗xg4

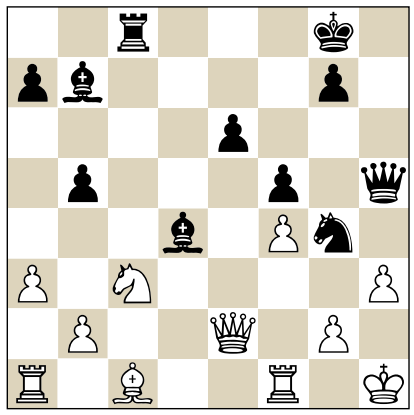
The knight cannot be taken, 17.fxe5, because of 17...♕xd4+ 18.♔h1 ♕g1+ 19.♖xg1 ♘f2 mate.



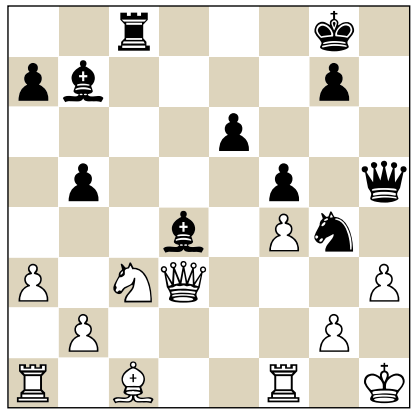
17...♗xd4+ 18.♔h1 ♘xg4
Here I had to see that 19...f5 wins against both his 19th moves.
19.♘xf8
After 19.♘g5 f5 the win is a bit slower, but White is still helpless after 20.h3 ♖f6 21.♘f3 ♖h6.



19...f5!
Here it's important too. I should avoid 19...♕h4, because of 20.♕h7+, and White saves himself.
20.♘g6 ♕f6 21.h3
There is not much left to say. If he plays 21.♘e5 then 21...♘xh2 wins.
21...♕xg6 22.♕e2 ♕h5
Attacking the h3-pawn.



23.♕d3?
I guess he got a bit tired at the end of the game.
He could have prolonged the agony with 23.♖f3, but I don't think it would have changed the outcome: 23...♘f2+ 24.♔h2 (or 24.♖xf2 ♕xh3+ 25.♔g1 ♕xg2 mate) 24...♗xf3 25.♕xf3 ♕xf3 26.gxf3 ♗xc3 (26...♘d3 also wins) 27. bxc3 ♖xc3, and Black wins.



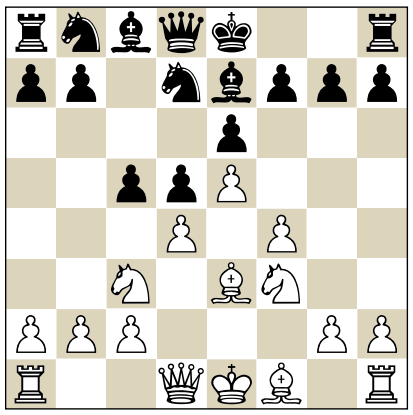
23...♗e3 And after this move he had to resign immediately.
At the press conference I brought up the comparison with Rotlevi-Rubinstein, which came to mind during the game. But I am sure Gelfand would have recognized it immediately as well, because he is also a big Rubinstein fan. I saw some very flattering reactions to our game, evergreen being one of them, and it would be silly to pretend that I didn't find this game incredibly beautiful, especially to play. I am quite proud of it.

NOTES BY
Sergey Karjakin

FR 4.4 – C11
Sergey Karjakin
Hou Yifan
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (1)

I have never liked playing on my birthday. As a child, I remember being beaten on that day by the sister of grandmaster Alexander Onischuk, which thoroughly spoiled the occasion ☺. Then, in my first Wijk in 2003, I drew against Koneru. And now a new birthday, a new tournament, and a new female opponent!

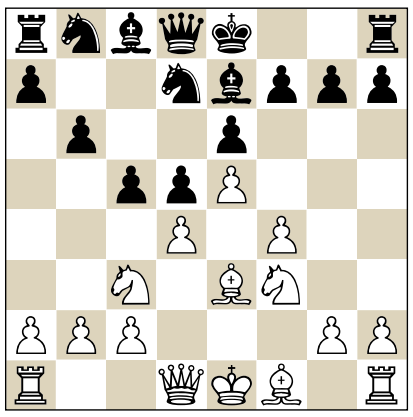
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♗e7 7.♗e3



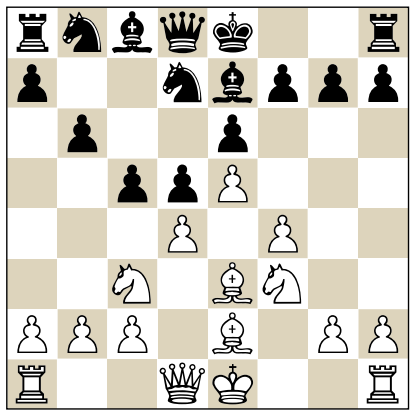
7...b6

Following Morozevich. Usually Black plays 7...♘c6 or 7...0-0, but as usual Morozevich is always looking for new ways at an early stage.

Here I stopped to think, and I decided to allow the exchange ...♗a6 only in a favourable version for me.



8.♗e2 Here Shirov played 8.♘e2, and Bologan 8.♗d3, after which Black exchanged bishops in a more favourable version than the game with 8...♗a6.



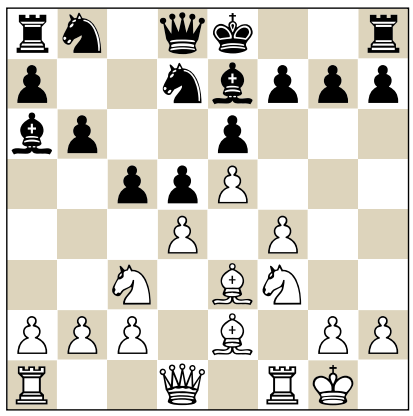
8...♗a6?

Seemingly logical, but here this is a serious inaccuracy! One senses that Yifan was playing the position 'at sight', without a sufficiently deep feeling for it. The problem is that now, after the exchange, the white knight goes to e2 with tempo, which in turns makes the c4 and f5 breaks possible.

Black should have continued developing with 8...♘c6 9.0-0 0-0.

9.0-0

Already here 9.f5 was quite good, but I decided to delay this move for the moment.

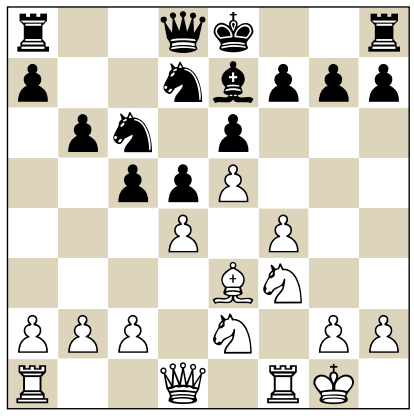


9...♗xe2

If 9...0-0 I was now planning 10.f5! ♗xe2 11.♘xe2 exf5 12.c3!, supporting the d4-pawn. Sooner or later, after ♘f4, Black will lose the d5-pawn, which leads to an enduring advantage for White.

10.♘xe2 ♘c6

This allows a break, but after 10...♘a6 11.f5 White also has an obvious advantage.

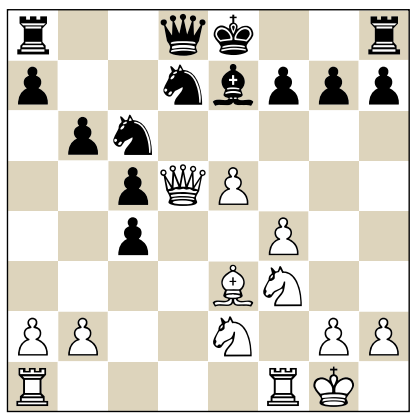


11.c4!

Simple but effective. Black has not managed to complete her development, so I have time for this break. White already has a big advantage.

11...dxc4 Both 11...cxd4 12.cxd5 and 11...♘xd4 12.♗xd4 cxd4 13.cxd5 are clearly better for White.

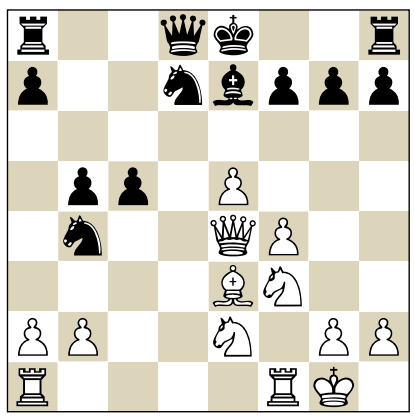
12.d5 exd5 13.♕xd5



13...♘b4

It is very important that Black has not managed to play ...0-0, so 13...♘dxe5 does not work.

14.♕xc4 b5 15.♕e4

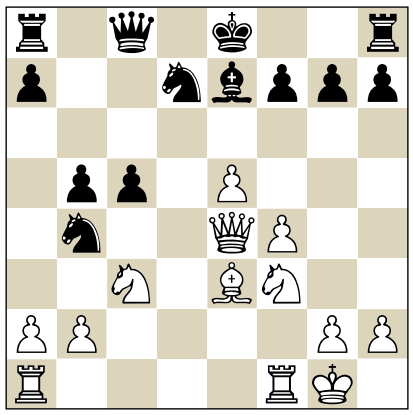


15...♕c8

At the board I was not 100 per cent sure that there was an easy win after 15...c4 16.♖ad1 0-0 (16...♘d3 17.♘c1!,

winning) 17.e6 ♘c5 18.exf7+ ♔h8 19. ♖xd8 ♘xe4 20.♖xa8 ♖xa8, but after 21.♘e5 the f7-pawn is evidently too strong, and White must win.

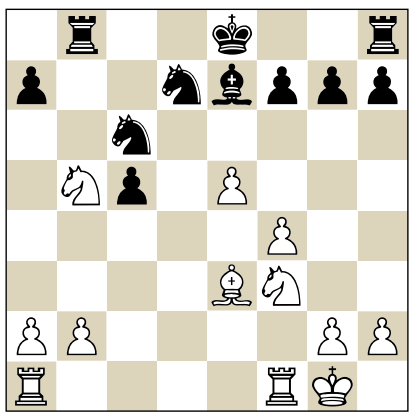
16.♘c3



16...♕c6!

Transposing into an endgame a pawn down. In the event of, say, 16...a6 17. a3 ♘c6 18.♘d5 White dominates.

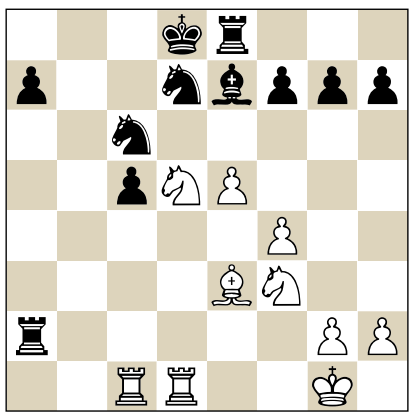
17.♕xc6 ♘xc6 18.♘xb5 ♖b8



19.♘c7+! Playing for the initiative! I could have gone 19.a4, of course, but I did not want to allow 19...0-0.

19...♔d8 20.♘d5 ♖xb2 21.♖fd1 ♖e8 Preparing ...♗f8. The Chinese lady had spent a lot of time on her last few moves, and she was now in serious time-trouble.

22.♖ac1 ♖xa2

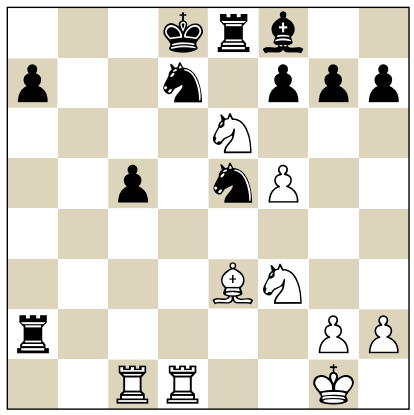


NEW IN CHESS

Sergey Karjakin: 'A new tournament, a new birthday, and a new female opponent!'

23.♘d2 Perhaps White's only inaccuracy in this game, from the standpoint of the silicon mind. But from the human point of view this looks extremely unpleasant, and since Yifan had only about five minutes left, it is not surprising that she did not manage to find the only defence to avoid a rapid defeat. White wants to transfer his knight to e4 or b3.

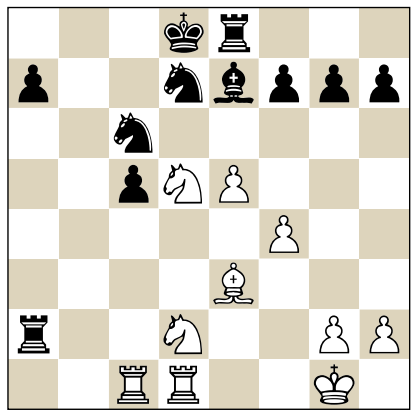
Probably most forceful was the computer line 23.f5! ♗f8 24.♘f4! ♘xe5 25.♘e6+!



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

25...♖xe6 26.fxe6 ♘xf3+ 27.gxf3 fxe6 28.♗xc5 ♗xc5+ 29.♖xc5.

As for, say, the variation 23.♘xe7 ♔xe7 24.♖xc5 ♘cxe5 25.fxe5 ♘xc5 26.♗xc5+ ♔e6 27.♗xa7! ♖c8 (27... ♖xa7? 28.♘d4+), despite the computer's high assessment, this does not look so clear. Black can put up a very resilient defence.



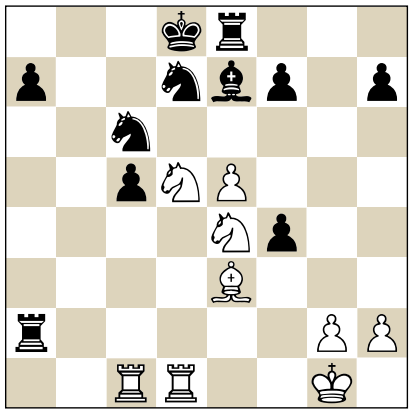
23...g5?

The decisive mistake! Black's desire to play actively is understandable, but it transpires that this move does not prevent White's manoeuvre.

23...♖a4! was the only defence. But here it has to be realized that after 24.♘b3 Black has the only reply 24... ♘a5!. White might have had to admit that his manoeuvre was faulty, and go back with 24.♘f3, nevertheless retaining an advantage.

As for the natural 23...♘d4, this would have run into 24.♗xd4! cxd4 25.♘b3 ♗a3 26.♖c4, with a large advantage for White.

24.♘e4 gxf4



25.♗xc5!

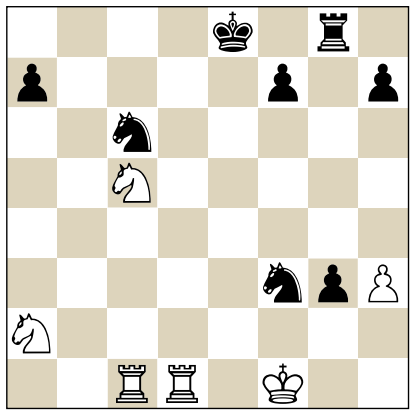
All the white pieces are excellently coordinated, and Black will inevitably lose material.

25...♗xc5+ 26.♘xc5 ♖g8 27.g3 fxg3 28.h3

Here 28.h4 was slightly more accurate, but this is no longer so important.

28...♘dxe5 29.♘b4+ ♔e8 29...♔e7 30.♘xa2 ♘d4 31.♖xd4 ♘f3+ 32.♔g2 ♘xd4 33.♖e1+ would also have left Black little chance of resisting.

30.♘xa2 ♘f3+ 31.♔g2 ♘h4+ 32.♔f1 ♘f3

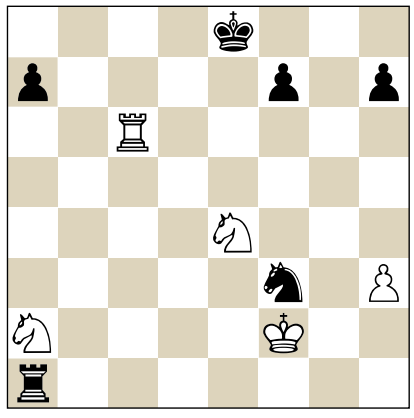


33.♘e4!

Simplifying the position and moving into the technical stage of the game.

33...g2+ 34.♔f2 g1♕+ 35.♖xg1 ♖xg1 36.♖xc6 ♖a1

The rest of the game is not of particular interest. I managed to convert my extra knight without blundering anything on the way ☺.



37.♘f6+ ♔e7 38.♘c3 ♘e5 39.♘cd5+ ♔d8 40.♖c3 ♖a2+ 41.♔g3 ♖d2 42.♔f4 ♘g6+ 43.♔g5 ♘e7 44.♘xe7 ♔xe7 45.♖e3+ ♔d8 46.♖a3 ♖g2+ 47.♘g4 h6+ 48.♔h4 f5 49.♘xh6

Black resigned. An excellent present from Yifan for my birthday, and, incidentally, with the exception of the far from obvious inaccuracy 23.♘d2, quite a good game on my part!

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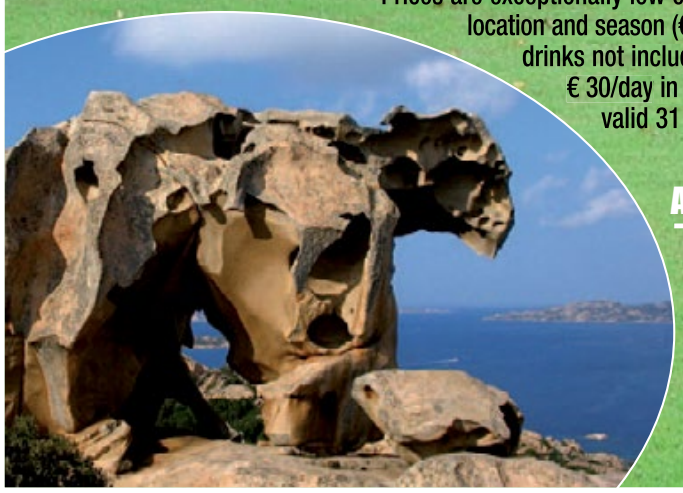

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NOTES BY
Anish Giri

SL 6.11 – E01
Anish Giri
Fabiano Caruana
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (11)

Normally, when writing an introduction to a game that I won, I would write something about my tournament situation and the reason why I was particularly ambitious for this game. This time I simply had too many reasons to be ambitious, so a fight was definitely on the cards.

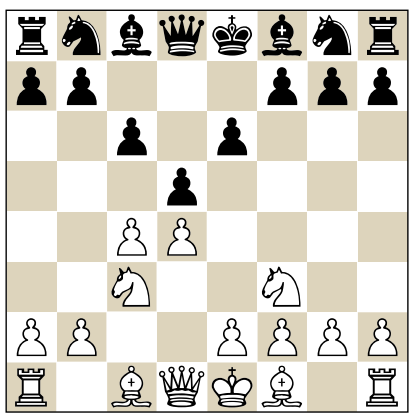
1.d4 When I played Fabiano in Wijk aan Zee last year, it was hard for me. I didn't know what to expect, as I share most of my repertoire with him (and a disastrous loss it was!). Now things were even worse, and even more of our cards were known to the other (both Caruana and Giri are being trained by Vladimir Chuchelov – ed.). Nevertheless, I decided to just prepare as I would do for any other player.

1...d5 2.c4 e6

When thinking about what Fabiano would do in an attempt not to play our main openings, the Grünfeld and the Slav, I applied the method of elimination and realized that ...♗b4+ should somehow be his only way. But I forgot one other line.

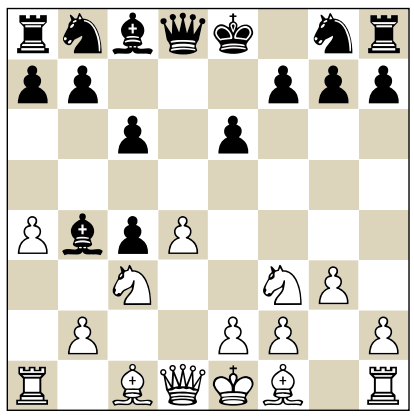
3.♘f3 c6 The Noteboom Slav, always a surprise. Now it became a little bit of a guessing game: Who knows what? Where to go? And where to deviate?

4.♘c3 I decided to stay principled and ask him if he was really ready to bluff me all the way.



4...dxc4! And he was! **5.a4 ♗b4 6.g3!?** Finally I decided to transpose to my favourite type of position with a bishop on g2, leading to a kind of Catalan. Believe me, I have played the move g2-g3 at times when it was far more inappropriate than in this position.

6.e3 leads to highly complex positions that I am slightly familiar with after 6...b5 7.♗d2 a5 8.axb5 ♗xc3 9.♗xc3 cxb5 10.b3 ♗b7 11.bxc4 b4, but I saw no need to take the game out of my comfort zone.



6...♘f6

I think this is the wrong choice. With this particular move order, Black had another very tempting option.

After 6...c5!? basically my only reference was a game Del Rio-Perez Candelario, played at a board close to me in the recent Spanish League. The good thing about those competitions is that you get to know many other players, with their own ideas and views on chess. That game continued 7.♗g2 ♘c6 8.♗e3 ♘ge7!. An aesthetically very pleasing move. Now Del Rio went 9.0-0?! and his opponent took on d4. When I asked him what was wrong with 9...♘f5, he nodded and said: 'Yes, ...♘f5 is better!'

But while thinking about my move 6.g3, I realized that instead of 9.0-0, White can take on c5. I quickly scanned the possibilities and came to the conclusion that I shouldn't be much worse. That, combined with the bishop on g2 – enough reasons to go for it! After 9.dxc5 things are not that easy for Black. For example in the game Harikrishna-Nybäck, he got under pressure after 9...♘d5 10.♗d2 ♘xc3 11.♗xc3 ♗xc3+ 12.bxc3 ♕a5 13.0-0 ♕xc5 14.♖b1 a6 15.♘d2 0-0 16.♘e4 ♕e7 17.♕d6!.

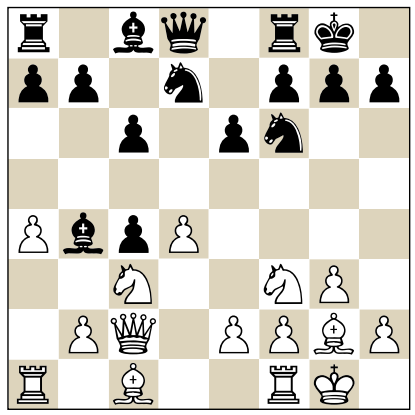
7.♗g2

Now I was happy.

7...♘bd7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♕c2

I had no idea about this position, but I felt very comfortable. I played this natural move pretty fast. My plan includes building up the pressure with ♖d1 and also perhaps recapturing the lonely soldier on c4 with moves like ♘a2 or ♘d2.

The immediate 9.♘d2 felt premature, and indeed, after 9...e5! 10.♘xc4 exd4 11.♕xd4 ♘c5! (11...♘b6 was what I had seen and is also good enough) Black is just better.



9...♕a5!?

I don't know where Fabiano excavated this move. After the game he told me he thought it was theory. In fact, it has almost never been played, but it isn't bad at all. Maybe my opponent had once looked at this line, maybe even in some other move order.

Instead of the text-move, 9...♕e7, to play for ...e5, looks logical. It seems premature though in view of 10.♗f4!, preventing ...e5, and after 10...a5 (10...♘d5 11.♗d2, and e4 is coming) 11.e4, the queen on e7 is clearly misplaced.

However, 9...a5!? seems the most flexible. Now, once I lose some of my coordination and go for the c4-pawn, Black will get in his ...e5: 10.♖d1 (after 10.e4!? the game can continue with the standard sequence 10...e5!? – 10...h6 is also possible, of course – 11.dxe5 ♘g4 12.e6! fxe6, with standard compensation, but somehow this par-

When he finally broke the ice in Round 11, Anish Giri didn't mind showing his win against Fabiano Caruana to Tata Steel press chief Tom Bottema and the assembled journalists.

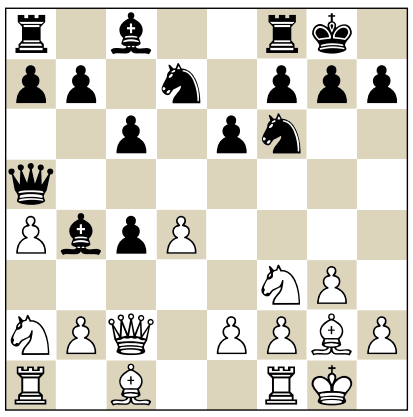
ticular version looks fine for Black) 10...♕e7 11.♘a2 (11.♗f4!? is possible here, too, but Black is happy with the inclusion of ♖d1 and ...a5: 11...♘d5 12.♗d2) 11...♗d6 12.♕xc4 e5 13.♕c2, with a balanced position. Both sides have their pluses.

10.♘a2

I must say I was a bit too optimistic. If Fabiano had found the correct plan, things would not have been that clear. It was also possible to build up the pressure.

After 10.♗g5!? the queen turns out to be misplaced on a5: 10...h6 11.♗xf6 ♘xf6 12.♘e5!.

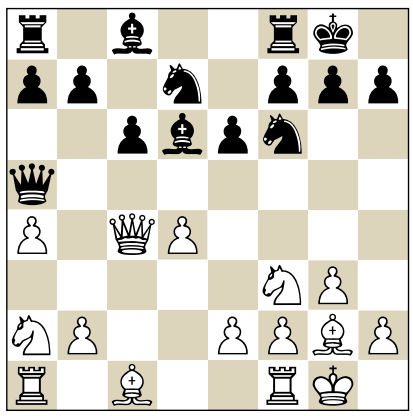
10.♖d1!? was also an option, and also clever: 10...e5 11.♘a2! ♗e7 12.♗d2!, and the queen can't get across the 5th rank to h5: 12...♕c7 13.♕xc4.



10...♗d6? The bishop is really awkward here. It reminds me of my game against Erwin l'Ami, where ...♗d6 looked more natural at first sight, but in fact ...♗e7 was far more clever.

After 10...♗e7 the same sequence doesn't work, while the ...e5 push still has enough supporters: 11.♕xc4!? (11.♗d2 was my initial idea, but after 11...♕h5 Black will follow up with ...e5 and have easy play) 11...♘b6 12.♕c2 ♕xa4 13.b3 ♕a5. The queen can return to its shelter. Still, White has compensation for the pawn after 14.e4 ♘bd7 and, say, 15.♖d1.

11.♕xc4!



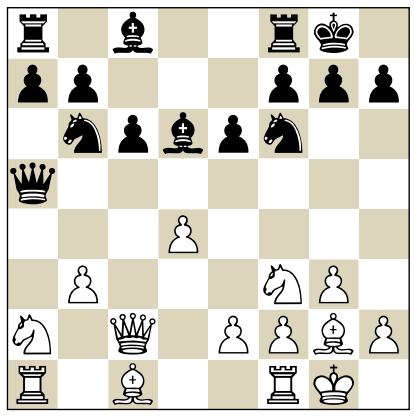
11...♘b6? Going for a losing sequence. This was the last chance for Black to choose the correct plan.

After 11...e5! things aren't too bad, even though I have a good version here with the queen on a5 making little sense.

12.♕c2 ♕xa4 Let's not abuse the question marks, as once you say A, you have to say B as well.

12...♕f5 leads nowhere: 13.♕b3 ♕d5 14.♕d1!, and ♘c3 comes with tempo, and then it all unfolds nicely.

13.b3 ♕a5

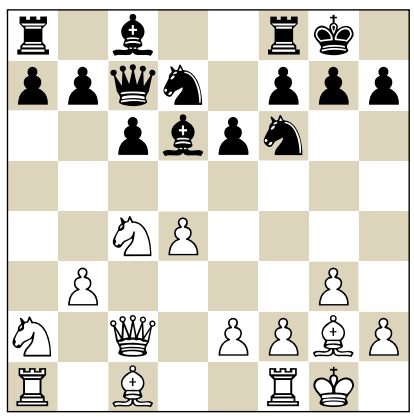


14.♘e5? I was so happy with this move that I didn't even realize that I could have won the game outright. The fact that I could win on move 14 shows that perhaps something went wrong with Black's opening, but then again I couldn't imagine it was that bad already, especially since Fabiano took a lot of time on his last few moves. Still, ♗d2 is a threat here and Black is in deep trouble.

After 14.e4! ♗e7 I have 15.♘g5!, and I am threatening to trap the queen and to play e5 at the same time!

14...♘bd7 Almost the only move that does not lose material.

15.♘c4 ♕c7



16.♘xd6

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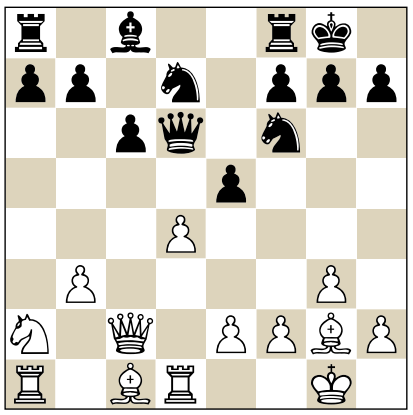
16...♕xd6 17.♖d1

Now I have incredible compensation, something a Catalan player never manages to get. Fabiano tries the only way to free himself:

17...e5

But even that fails:

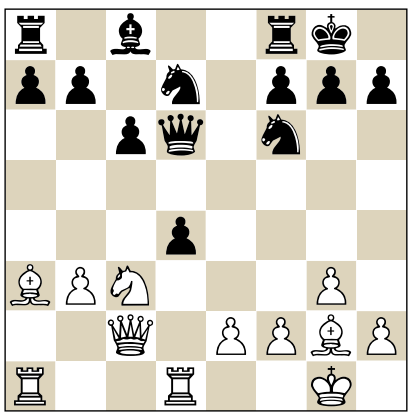


18.♘c3!

If not for this resource, Black would have had reasonable chances to survive. He is about to solve the problem of his light-squared bishop, but fortunately I was in time to realize that the exchange sac that I initially thought I should avoid is actually something I should look forward to.

Obviously, 18.♗b2 gives strong compensation, but after, say, 18...exd4 19.♗xd4 ♕e7 20.♘c3 a6 21.e4 ♖d8, intending 22...♘f8, Black is still in the game, although even here he is probably in deep trouble after 22.♘a4!.

18...exd4 19.♗a3



19...c5?

The position was already bad, but Black had to go for the exchange sac anyway with 19...♕e5! 20.♗xf8 ♘xf8. This was what I had been afraid of at first when I sat thinking about 18.♘c3. But then I noticed that I can actually centralize my knight very nicely: 21.♘e4! ♘d5! (21...♗g4 22.♕c5! was more or less the line I saw; 21...♘e6 will just lose in the long run: 22.♘xf6+ ♕xf6 23.b4). With this one Black is still fighting, but obviously his position is pretty sad anyway, for example 22.♕d3 ♘e6 23.f4, when Black can try to sacrifice the whole rook with ...♘xf4, but it shouldn't be enough.

20.e3!

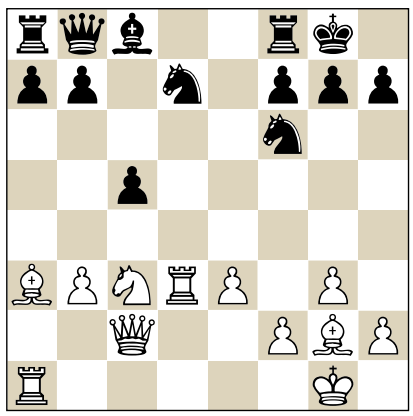
Here 20.♘a4 was tempting, but after 20...♖e8 21.♘xc5 ♕c7 Black is at least able to complete his development, although here, too, he will have a terrible endgame ahead, of course.

20...d3

Cute, but it won't save Black.

21.♖xd3 ♕b8

This was my opponent's last idea. Now he is intending ...b6, inviting me to give up the long diagonal. However, now my pieces suddenly switch to the kingside.



22.♘d5! ♘xd5 23.♖xd5

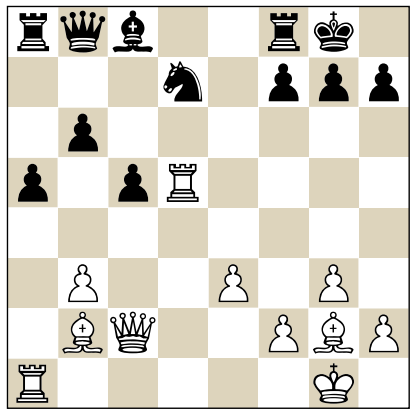
I had seen my next move coming and was very proud of my concept.

23...b6 24.♗b2!

And suddenly it becomes clear that Black's position is hopeless. I have all the diagonals and soon I will have all the files, too.

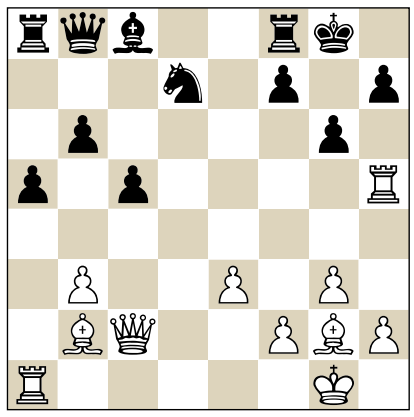
24...a5

Now I was thinking about the most spectacular way to win in order to secure the daily 'public prize' (worth 300 euro – ed.). However, not having won a single game in the previous 10 rounds, I got angry at myself for having such luxurious thoughts and decided to play safe and enter my final piece into the attack (fortunately I won the prize anyway).



25.♖a4!?

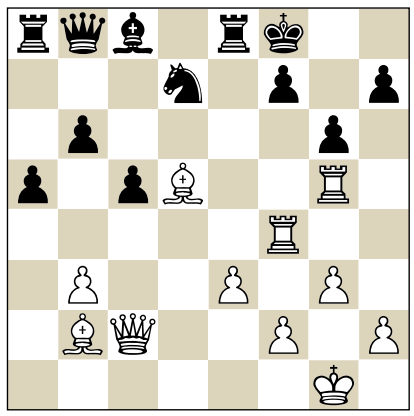
I thought that with two killing bishops, a queen and now two killing rooks, nothing could go wrong. Instead of my move there was 25.♖h5 g6



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

26.♕f5!! Sniff sniff.

25...♖e8 26.♖g5 g6 27.♗d5 ♔f8 28.♖f4



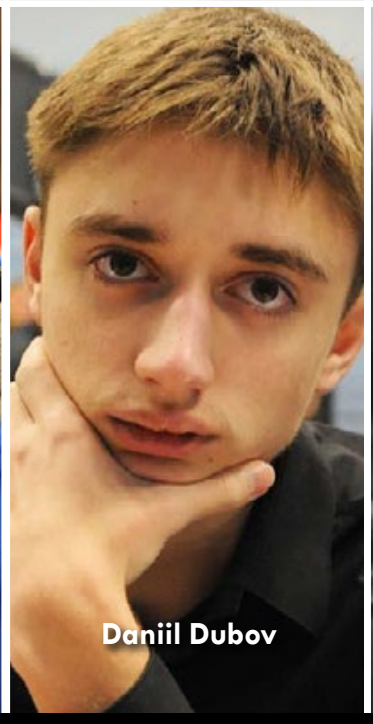
And as things started to look a little too humiliating, my opponent congratulated me. ■

Sergey Shipov on his charge Daniil Dubov: 'His forte is intuition, sense of danger, prophylactic thinking.'

The all-play-all tournaments in Wijk aan Zee are played on a single stage. Between the rows of tables of the A-Group and the B-Group the distance is just three metres. You take a couple of steps, and here they are: Anand, Carlsen and the other immortals. But how difficult it is to overcome this short distance and sit down to play at a board of the main tournament! Sergey Shipov takes a closer look at the up-and-coming young talents.

PHOTOS NEW IN CHESS

Richard Rapport


Daniil Dubov

Robin van Kampen

Nils Grandelius

Alexander Ipatov

Three metres from heaven

Essentially, it was only the right to end up the following year in stellar company that was at stake in the B-Group. The rest was of no importance – at any event, for the ambitious young players, whose career still lies ahead. On this occasion there were quite a few of them – half the field.

Now, when the battle has concluded, the question arises: which of the novices may shine in the A-Group in the immediate future?

The strict reply that suggests itself is – none of them! My subjective impression is that at present the young players in the B-Group are a very long way behind the elite stars, and they are developing insufficiently rapidly. No one is demonstrating a genuinely high quality of play and rapid development, like the young Kasparov, Karjakin and Carlsen.

However, this is merely an approximate extrapolation. At such an age (up to twenty) sharp spurts and unexpected transformations are still possible. Besides, in the history of chess there are numerous examples of players not shining in their youth, but continuing to progress after they formally became adults, and breaking into the elite later than their contemporaries.

What is typical of modern young talents? What distinguishes them from the promising youngsters of earlier times?

Of course, the computer.

With its enormous databases and monstrously strong playing programs, the machine, on the one hand, gives youngsters great knowledge, but on the other hand it crushes young chess individuality, like that mincer in a well-known Pink Floyd video, erases distinctions, develops in players identical habits, and makes their faces similar... The machine does not teach playing flexibility, does not help in taking account of human factors in the battle, and on the whole, strictly speaking, it restricts the possibilities for young players.

That youngster, who is able to retain his 'persona' before the monitor, who has the audacity to argue with the computer, who retains the ability to create, despite the strict verdicts of the playing programs – it is he who will become a new chess star. He will stand out from the crowd.

Let us examine the promising B-Group players in person.

Richard Rapport

Age 16

9 points, 1st-2nd place

He is an optimist. A very self-confident young man. He plays aggressively and energetically, like an adult. The most appropriate term characterizing Richard's play is enterprise. He is not afraid of weakening his position.

He likes creating discomfort for his opponent, even at the risk of losing. In tactical complications the young fighter feels very much at home. And nervous stress is nothing to him.

Such play cannot but appeal to the spectators. It inevitably leads to a high percentage of decisive games. With the increasing fashion for tournaments with the three-point system for a win, this is also in Rapport's favour.

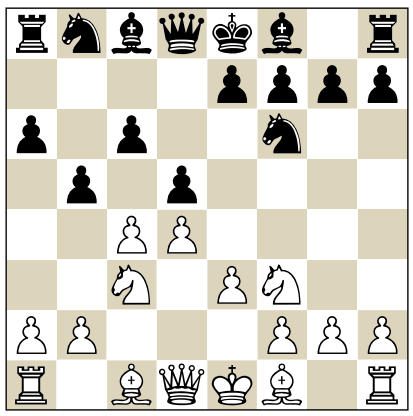
In Wijk aan Zee the Hungarian lad started briskly and finished powerfully, and everything went very well for him. Here is his best game, which excellently characterizes his style.

NOTES BY
Richard Rapport

SL 3.1 – D15
Richard Rapport
Sergei Movsesian
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (4)

This game was played in Round 4, after I had a nice start of 2½ out of 3. I decided to play something normal against Movsi, who was one of the best players in the B-Group.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.♘f3 b5

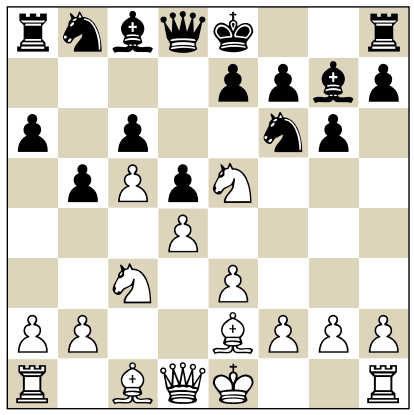


6.c5 A small surprise. At an earlier occasion I won a game with the old line 6.b3 ♗g4 7.h3 ♗xf3 8.gxf3.

6...g6 This line is a weapon of several Chinese players and I had checked it before the tournament for a game against Ni Hua.

Movsesian mostly plays 6...♘bd7, for example: 7.a3 a5 8.♕c2 g6 9.e4 dxe4 10.♘xe4 ♗g7 11.a4 b4 12.♗c4 0-0 13.0-0 ♘xe4 14.♕xe4 ♘f6! 15.♕xc6 ♗d7 16.♕b6 ♕xb6 17.cxb6 ♖fb8, with equal play in Eljanov-Movsesian, Sochi 2012.

7.♘e5 ♗g7 8.♗e2



8...♘fd7!? I think the main line is 8...0-0 9.0-0 ♗e6 etc.

9.f4 ♘xe5 10.fxe5

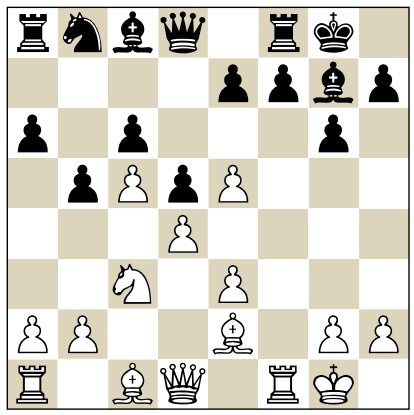
Here I was hoping he'd go for 10...f6.

10...0-0

I thought for 5-10 minutes to find something better than a transposition to the main line, but finally I decided to transpose anyway.

Less good is 10...f6, because of 11.exf6 exf6 12.e4! b4 13.♘a4 dxe4 14.♘b6 ♖a7 15.♕b3, and White had the initiative in Eljanov-Sokolov, Sarajevo 2009.

11.0-0 Lines like 11.e4 dxe4 12.♗e3 ♗f5 13.g4 ♗e6 14.h4 f6 looked too optimistic to me.



11...♖a7!

I think this is a very smart waiting move, which helps Black a lot once he plays ...f6. As it turned out, the ...♖a7 manoeuvre had already been seen in one game, and what makes it extra annoying is that that game was played in my country, but I didn't know about it!

The alternative 11...f6!? led to double-edged play after 12.exf6 exf6 13.e4 b4 14.♘a4 dxe4 15.♕b3+ ♔h8 16.♘b6 ♖a7 in Dziuba-Grabarczyk, Krakow 2006.

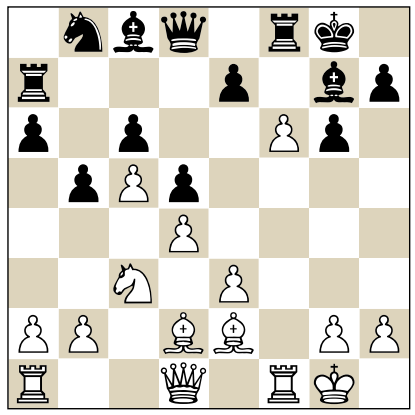
12.♗d2!? A normal developing move. After 12.b4 Black didn't react adequately (he should have replied 12...a5) and immediately got a worse position in the game Stohl-Dovzik, Hungary 2008: 12...f6 13.exf6 ♖xf6 14.♖xf6 ♗xf6 15.a4.

12...f6

Movsi decides to start a concrete operation against my centre.

12...a5 was also interesting: 13.♗e1! (13.a4?! b4 14.♘b5? looks nice, but I am not so sure about it after 14...♖a8!) 13...f6 14.exf6 exf6 15.♗g3. I thought such positions are slightly better for White, for instance 15...♗a6 16.a4! b4 17.♘b5!. Now this idea is not only nice, but probably correct too!

13.exf6



13...♖xf6 This came as a small surprise. I thought 13...exf6!? was a better way to fight.

For example: 14.♗e1!?, my initial plan, to find some target for my bishop, and now I checked 14...♖e7!?, which entails an interesting exchange sacrifice: 15.♗g3 ♘d7 16.♗d6 ♖xe3 17.♗xf8 ♕xf8, with compensation for Black.

14.e4 would give Black an extra tempo compared to the comment after 11...f6. After 14.b4!? Black can make use of the ...♖a7 manoeuvre: 14...f5 15.a4

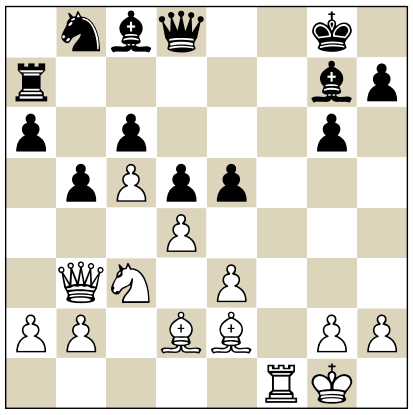
♖e7 16.axb5 axb5, with unclear play.

14.♕b3!? Another idea was 14.♗f3, in order not to allow him to exchange the rooks, and to prepare e4, but after 14...e5 15.dxe5 ♖f8 16.♘e2 ♘d7 Black is doing fine.

14...♖xf1+

14...e5 was also possible, but after 15.♖xf6 ♗xf6 the strong knight manoeuvre 16.♘e4 would give White a good game: 16...exd4 17.♘xf6+ ♕xf6 18.e4 ♗e6 19.♖f1 ♕e7 20.♕b4.

15.♖xf1 e5 Black is looking for sharp counterplay in the centre.

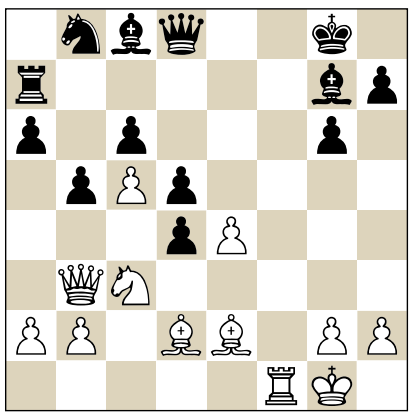


16.e4!? This was my initial plan, but objectively speaking 16.♘e4!? was probably a better option: 16...exd4 17.♘d6 ♘d7 18.♕a3! ♘f6 19.♗a5 ♕d7, with complicated play.

16...♗e6

After this move I became quite satisfied with my previous play, because I felt I must have some advantage.

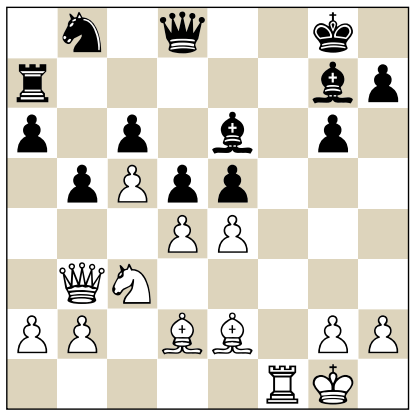
Now I think the most critical line was 16...exd4!, when I wanted to play a 'crazy looking' positional piece sacrifice:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

17.exd5!? dxc3 18.d6+ ♔h8 19.♗xc3 (so far everything is forced) 19...♕g8 20.♗xg7+ ♖xg7 21.♕c3, and I thought I would have some devilish compensation after 21...♗e6 22.a3 ♘d7 23.♗f3 etc.

More logical looks 17.♘xd5 ♗e6! 18.♗g4! (this is the key idea, but it's not as deadly as it was in the game) 18...♗f7 19.♖xf7 ♖xf7 20.♗e6 cxd5 21.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 22.exd5 ♕c8 23.d6+, with drawish compensation.



17.exd5! After 10-15 minutes of calculating I realized I had to take some fast action against the black army.

My original idea was 17.♗f3, but I couldn't find any advantage after 17...exd4 18.exd5 ♗f7! (this cold-blooded move keeps Black going in this sharp position) 19.♘e2 ♗xd5 20.♗xd5+ ♕xd5 21.♕xd5+ cxd5 22.♘f4 ♘c6, with equality.

Richard Rapport: 'An optimist. A very self-confident young man.'

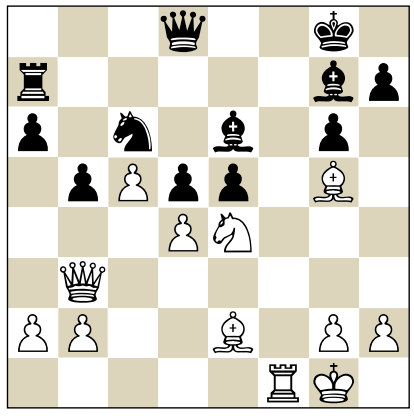
NEW IN CHESS

17...cxd5 18.♘e4!

In the next moves I took my best practical chances with a nice attacking idea which was easy to overlook.

After 18.♗f3 both 18...♖d7 19.dxe5 ♘c6 20.♘e2 ♕e7 and 18...♘c6!? 19.♗xd5 ♗xd5 20.♘xd5 ♘xd4 are playable for Black.

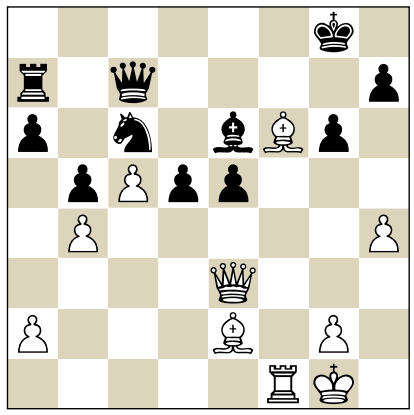
18...♘c6 19.♗g5 The knight on e4 makes Black's life difficult.



19...♕b8?

The decisive mistake. After this move Black's position collapses.

After 19...♕d7 20.♘f6+ ♗xf6 21.♗xf6 ♘xd4 22.♕e3 ♕c7 23.b4!? ♘c6 24.h4



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

I overestimated my compensation and thought I was almost winning, but now I think this is just a good attack and nothing more.

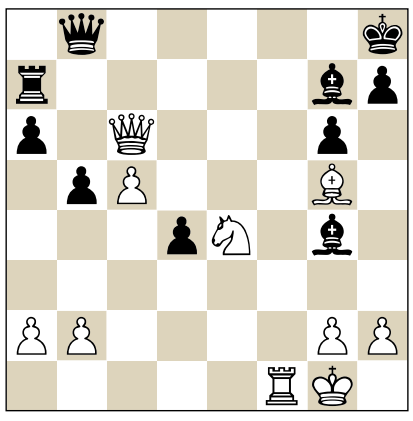
Black can also enter the endgame with 19...♘xd4 20.♗xd8 ♘xb3 21.axb3 dxe4 22.c6! ♖f7 23.♖d1. I think this endgame is very unpleasant in a practical game, but objectively speaking there is only a slight advantage for White.

Finally, after 19...♕c7, every piece would attack again: 20.♗g4! ♗f7 (20...

♗xg4 is bad because of 21.♕xd5+ ♔h8 22.♘d6) 21.♘f6+ ♗xf6 22.♗xf6 ♘xd4 23.♕c3, and Black has serious problems.

20.♗g4! After this nice trick White is close to the full point.

20...♗xg4 21.♕xd5+ ♔h8 22.♕xc6 exd4



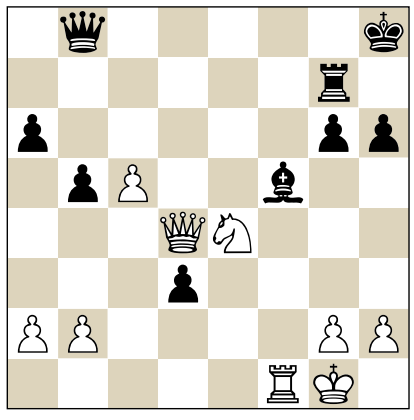
23.♗f6!

The bishop on g7 is a very good defender, so I decided to exchange it.

23...d3 24.♗xg7+ ♖xg7 25.♕d5

Every piece should move into its dream position. I thought that for the lady it was on d4.

25...h6 26.♕d4 ♗f5



27.♘d6 The better move was 27.♘f6!, but I am not a computer and I played a human move.

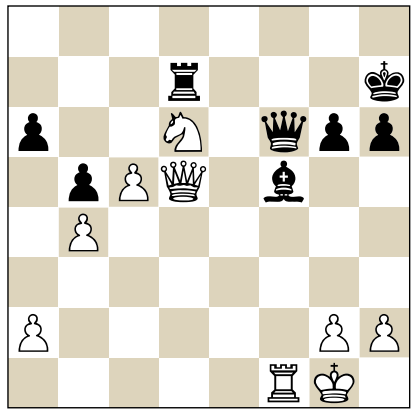
27...♕f8 28.♕xd3 ♖d7 29.♕d5

29.♕d4+ was easier.

29...♕f6 30.b4

I thought Black had no way to improve his position, so why not protect my pawns?

30...♔h7



31.h3!? My original idea was 31.♘e8!? ♕d4+ (31...♕e7 32.♘f6+!) 32.♕xd4 ♖xd4 33.♘d6 ♗e6 34.a3, which should be winning, but then I thought that I could still wait.

31...♕c3 The only practical chance.

32.c6

My coach would probably have been happier with the simple winning moves 32.♔h2!? ♕xb4 33.♕e5, because they leave Black without any counterplay.

32...♕e3+ 33.♔h2

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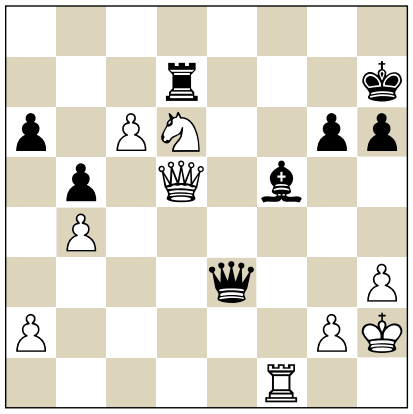


33...♗e6! Black is hoping for a perpetual. **34.cxd7 ♗xd5 35.d8♕ ♕e5+ 36.♔g1** Here I made an unnecessary repetition. **36...♕e3+ 37.♖f2 ♕e1+ 38.♖f1 ♕e3+ 39.♔h2**

'I am sure that, despite the formal second place (Naiditsch had the better tie-break), next year the organizers will admit Rapport into the A-Group.'

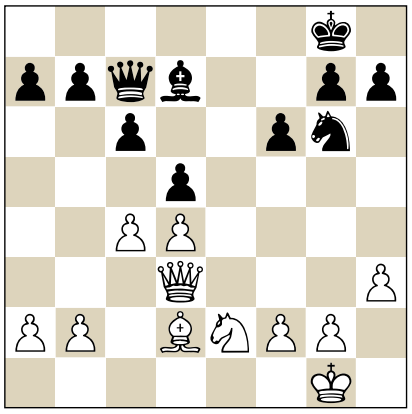
♕e5+ 40.♔h1 Black resigned without playing 40...♗xg2+, as it just loses: 41.♔xg2 ♕d5+ 42.♖f3 ♕d2+ 43.♖f2 ♕d5+ 44.♔g1 ♕d1+ 45.♔h2, and there is no perpetual.

■ ■ ■

I am sure that, despite the formal second place (Naiditsch had the better tie-break), next year the organizers will admit Rapport into the A-Group. After all, young talents have to be assisted! But how will he perform there? Will he be able to withstand the chess titans, who punish very strictly their opponent's misdemeanours?

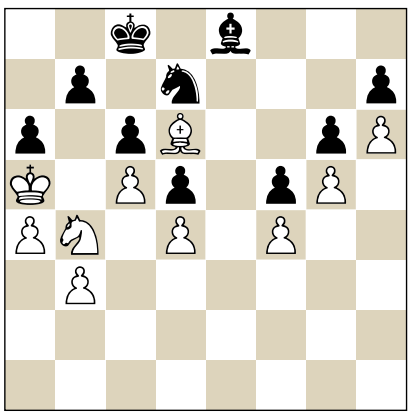
At the present moment it is easy to predict the result. Richard's weaknesses are the reverse side of his virtues – for the moment he lacks a sense of measure and a sense of danger, he is not strong in endings, he underestimates defects in his pawn structure, and he overestimates his own concrete threats.

The failures in the games with Naiditsch and Smeets vividly demonstrate what has been said.



Naiditsch-Rapport
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (11)
position after 24.♘xe2

It is Black to move. Richard handled this completely equal ending uncommonly passively, allowing his opponent to carry out all conceivable and inconceivable ideas. Possibly the young fighter naively assumed that he would be able to draw as he pleased. At some point, of course, he sensed the danger, but it was already too late. 32 moves later something terrible happened:



57.♘xa6! bxa6 58.♔xa6
There is no defence against the advance of the b3-pawn. Black resigned.

The conclusion is simple: Rapport faces a great deal of hard work to eliminate his deficiencies. Fate is kind to him. If he himself does not make a false step, and if he does not become prematurely conceited, he will join the elite.

Who knows, perhaps in the next Olympiad we will see Richard in the Hungarian team. The newcomer is unlikely to threaten the top three of this powerful team, but he may well end up on Board 4 or as one of the reserves.

Daniil Dubov

Age 16
7½ points, 5th place

The Muscovite came to prominence last year, when he shone in the Russian Championship Premier League, although experts also remarked earlier that his play was mature beyond his years.

It is hard for me to take a detached view of Daniil, since we have been working together for two and a half years, and with me he has become a grandmaster and performed successfully in strong tournaments.

But the view from inside is as follows...

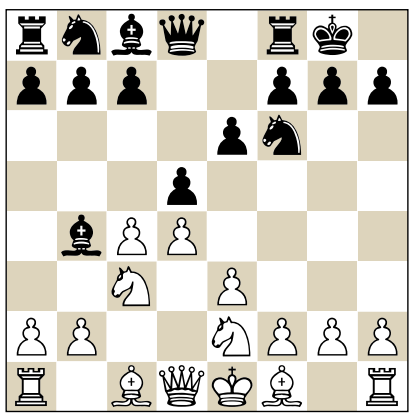
Dubov is a sceptic, which gives his play solidity, but partly prevents his talent from being fully disclosed. My pupil's forte is intuition, sense of danger, prophylactic thinking. Daniil sees more for his opponent than for himself. Therefore it is easier for him to achieve a positive result against very strong opponents, than to whitewash the 'tail'.

Dubov bears an amazing resemblance to players of the older, pre-computer generation. Despite regular work with the monitor, he has an immunity to computer infection, and he is able to think in plans, set-ups and general conceptions about chess. He is constantly thinking up purely human resources – both in analysis, and at the board. So that, in accordance with my thesis given above, he has every chance of becoming an original elite player.

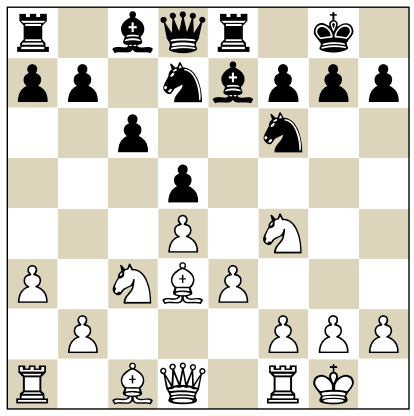
If Daniil succeeds in overcoming his doubts and aiming for a fierce fight, he can play a good game, for example...

NI 10.12 – E46
Daniil Dubov
Sergey Tiviakov
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (11)

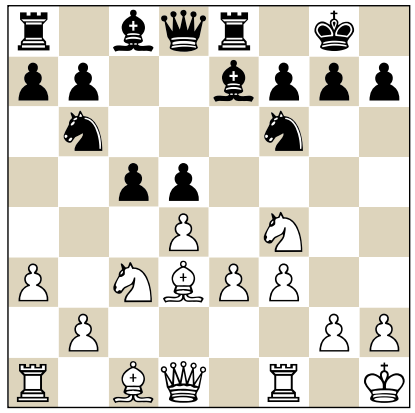
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3!
I do not understand players who reject this, the objectively strongest and most logical move, in favour of the insipid 3.♘f3. But I also don't condemn them. Chess is a game and not a scientific argument.
3...♗b4 4.e3 Before this in the tournament Daniil had also played the 4.♕c2 variation. But, as they say, everything in moderation. Varying your opening repertoire is a healthy practice.
4...0-0 5.♘e2 d5



This is not the only line for which we prepared. Yes, Tiviakov is predictable in the opening, but he has several aces up his sleeve.
6.a3 ♗e7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♘f4
A slight surprise for the opponent. Last year Dubov employed the plan with 8.g3.
8...c6 9.♗d3 ♖e8 10.0-0 ♘bd7



11.f3!
We knew that Sergey had experience with playing the given variation, and a quite positive experience. In Malakhov-Tiviakov, Sibenik 2009, White acted in a stifling manner, but he was unsuccessful: 11.♗c2 ♘b6 12.b3 ♗d6 13.♗b2 ♘e4 14.♘ce2 ♗f5 15.f3 ♗xf4 16.♘xf4 ♘d6 17.♖e1 ♕g5 18.♗c1 ♗xc2 19.♕xc2 ♕f6 20.♕f2 ♘d7 21.♗d2 ♘f8 22.♖ad1 ♘g6, with good counterplay for Black. We decided to pin our hopes on forceful play in the centre with f2-f3 and e3-e4.
11...♘b6 12.♔h1 12.♗c2 also has its point, in order if 12...c5 to direct the knight to e5 by 13.♘d3!.
12...c5
If 12...♗d6 there might have followed the forceful 13.e4!? dxe4 14.fxe4 ♗xf4 15.♗xf4, and after the capture on d4 (immediately or after the inclusion of ♗c8-g4) White advances his pawn to e5 with unfathomable complications... But it also might not have followed.



13.♗c2 A sensible novelty, leaving White a wide choice of options.
An earlier game creates a strong impression, and the ideas demonstrated in it are useful for young players. I recommend that you look at it in its entirety: 13.a4 cxd4 14.exd4 a5 15.b3 ♗d7 16.♗d2 ♗c6 17.♗c2 ♘bd7 18.g4 h6 19.♘ce2 ♕b6 20.♗e1 ♗d6 21.♗g3 ♕c7 22.♕d2 ♖e7 23.♘d3 ♘e4 24.fxe4 dxe4 25.d5 exd3 26.♕xd3

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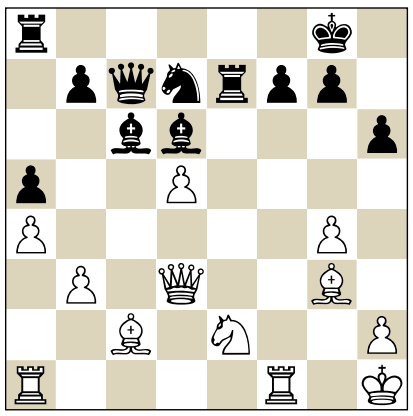


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

26...♖xe2 27.♕h7+ ♔f8 28.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 29.♖f1+ ♘f6 30.♗g6+ ♔e7 31.♕xg7+ ♔d8 32.♕xf6+ ♕e7 33.♕xe7+ ♖xe7 34.dxc6 ♗xg3 35.♖f8+ ♔c7 36.♖xa8 ♗e1 37.cxb7 ♔xb7 38.♖h8, and White soon won, Kharlov-Kharitonov, Moscow 1992.

Of course, left overboard were many important tactical nuances and several real improvements for both sides.

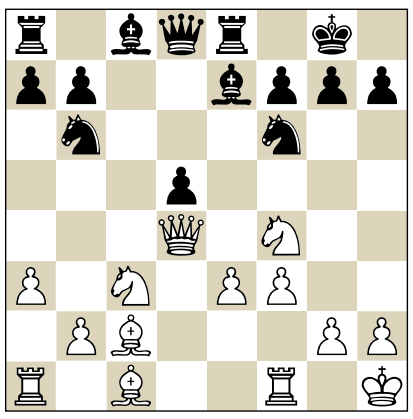
13...cxd4

In what was a new situation for him, Sergey decided to stabilize the centre – a perfectly logical decision.

Objectively it was better to maintain the tension by 13...♗d6. After this in my analysis I wrote out a whole sheet of variations, interesting from the positional point of view. But I did not in fact come to a clear conclusion. All the time White's advantage slips out of his hands.

14.♕xd4

After the game Daniil revealed that he considered 14.exd4 to be the strongest, with unhurried play, aiming for the control of certain squares. But at the board he decided to play more sharply, in view of his big advantage on the clock and his own fighting mood.

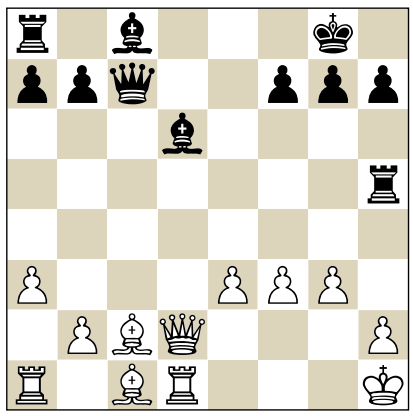


Daniil Dubov 'has an immunity to computer infection'.

NEW IN CHESS

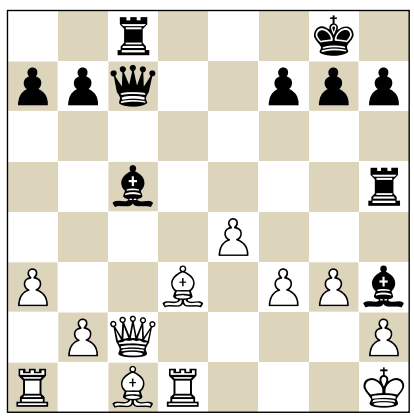
14...♗e6 Too simple to be correct. With the rook on e8 it is strange to place so many bishops on the e-file.

Had he had more time and been more confident in his powers, Tiviakov could have played more sharply and more aggressively: 14...♗d6!. The idea of the pawn sacrifice is to switch the rook to h5. There could follow 15.♘fxd5 ♘bxd5 16.♘xd5 ♘xd5 17.♕xd5 ♖e5 18.♕d2 ♖h5 19.g3 ♕c7 20.♖d1



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

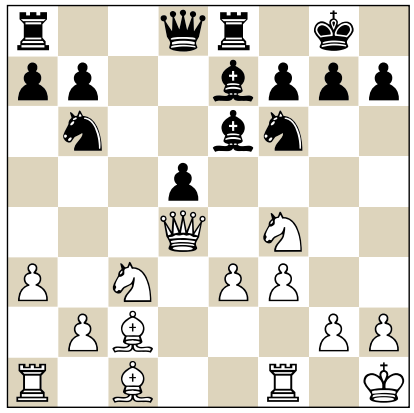
20...♗e7! (such an unhurried move is hard to foresee for both sides) 21.♕f2 ♗e6 22.e4 (otherwise White cannot develop) 22...♖c8 23.♗d3 ♗c5 24.♕g2 (in the event of 24.♕e1 ♕e5 new threats arise, for example, the rook sacrifice on h2) 24...♗h3 25.♕c2, and now, as is supposed to happen in all modern analyses, things end in a pretty draw:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

25...♕xg3! 26.hxg3 ♗g4+ 27.♔g2 ♗h3+ with perpetual check.

True, taking into account Dubov's style and natural inclination, the infiltrating reply 15.a4 ♗e5 16.♕d3 was more probable, with some pressure for White.



15.♘xe6

Within a couple of years, in such a position the Muscovite will play more resolutely: 15.e4! dxe4 16.♘xe6 fxe6 17.♕f2!, condemning Black to a difficult and possibly hopeless defence.

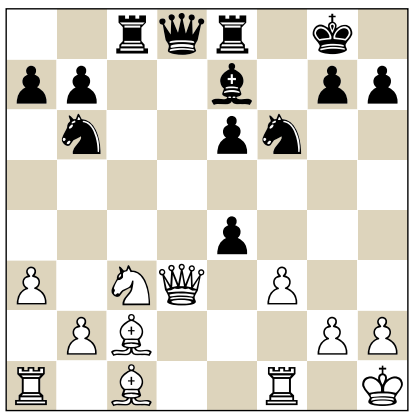
15...fxe6 16.♕d3 ♖c8

16...♘bd7! would have given better practical chances.

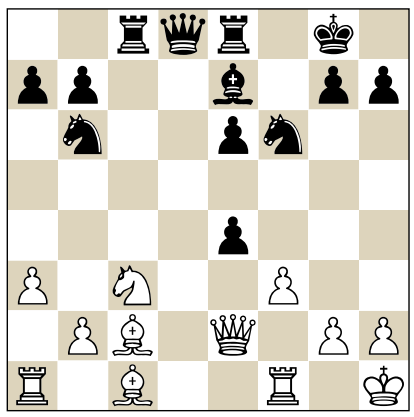
Then Daniil would have had to decide on 17.e4! and calculate the following variations: 17...♘e5 18.♕e2 ♘c6 (18...d4? 19.♖d1) 19.♗e3! d4 20.♖ad1 e5 21.f4! with the initiative, as well as 17...♘c5 18.♕e2 d4 19.♖d1 e5 20.b4 ♘cd7 21.♗b3+ ♔h8 22.♘a4! with the intention of playing the knight to d3 via b2.

I believe that he could have done this, but it would have demanded some effort. But in the game things turned out much more simply.

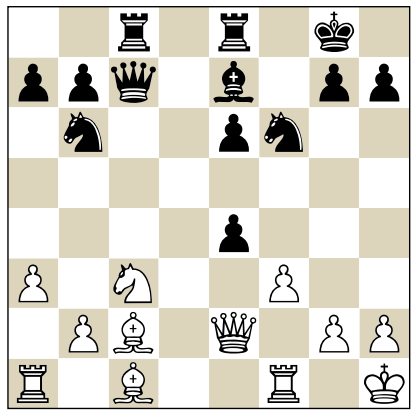
17.e4! dxe4 From afar, after 17...d4 the young fighter had been genuinely planning 18.♘e2?, but on closer inspection he noticed the elementary refutation 18...♖xc2! 19.♕xc2 d3. Fortunately, a sensible alternative was found: 18.♘b5 ♘bd7 19.♘xd4 ♘e5 20.♕d1 ♗c5 21.♘e2 – Black's initiative evaporates, and White's pawn remains.



18.♕e2! Of course. With the queens on the board, White's bishops display their full power. The light-square giant is especially dangerous, threatening the life of the black king. At this point Tiviakov was already in severe time-trouble, so that his practical chances were very slight.



18...♕c7 Initially the computer views Black's position quite optimistically, recommending 18...exf3 19.♖xf3 ♖c6, but after the normal developing moves 20.♗e3 a6 21.♖af1 ♖f8 22.♘e4 it too becomes less cheerful. Then Black loses quickly after 22...♘xe4 23.♖xf8+ ♗xf8 24.♗xe4 ♘d5 25.♕h5 g6 26.♗xg6 hxg6 27.♕xg6+ ♗g7 28.♖f7, and gradually after 22...♘bd5 23.♗d4 ♕c8 24.♗b1! etc.



19.♗b3! ♗d6 20.♗g5 The threat to the h2-pawn proves to be illusory.

20...♔h8

Here 20...♗xh2 would have led to the loss of the exchange: 21.f4 ♗g3 22.♗xf6 gxf6 23.♕g4+ ♕g7 24.♗xe6+.

21.♘b5 ♕b8 22.♖ad1 ♗c5

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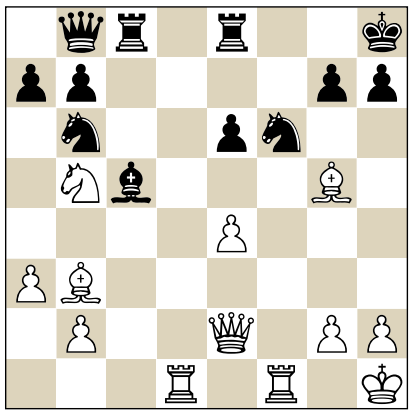
Here too: 22...♗xh2 23.f4 ♗g3 24.♘d6. 22...exf3 23.♖xf3 ♗e5 (23...♗xh2? 24.♖xf6) 24.♘xa7 ♖cd8 was slightly more resilient, after which a stage of quiet manoeuvring would have begun – 25.♖xd8 ♖xd8 26.♘b5 ♘bd5 27.g3 etc.

23.fxe4



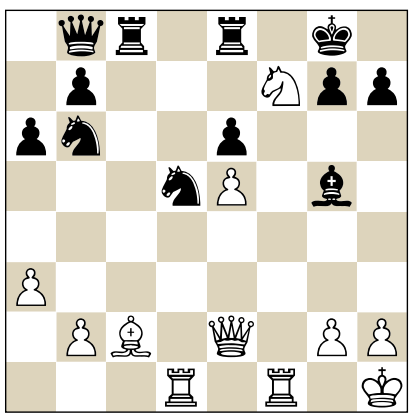
23...a6?

This hastens the inevitable. Playing on a pawn down after 23...♕e5 24.♗xf6 gxf6 25.♘xa7 ♖cd8 26.♖xd8 ♖xd8 27.♘b5 was tedious, but only in this way could the game have been prolonged.

24.e5! ♘fd5 25.♗c2!

Black missed this resource. The light-square raider achieves its aim – the black king is doomed.

25...♗e3 26.♘d6 ♗xg5 27.♘f7+ ♔g8

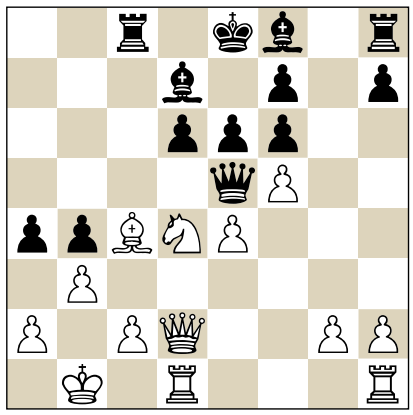


28.♗xh7+! ♔xh7 29.♕e4+!

And without waiting for the mating finish 29...♔g8 30.♘xg5 ♘f6 31.♖xf6, Black resigned. This was our best day in Wijk aan Zee. As a whole.

Daniil is unchildishly obstinate, and it can be difficult to make him change his mind about something. For example, about the advisability of choosing this or that opening or about the evaluation of an important position. However, this is the tricky part of a trainer's work at a tournament – to sense the moment when he has to be persuaded, or when it is worth supporting the fighter in his aspirations, dubious though they may be. Everything is determined by the result. On this occasion the result turned out to be modest (all places in the tournament table, apart from first, were of complete indifference to us), and hence my mission was not successful.

Of course, the young Muscovite still has many deficiencies in his play. I will mention only one: a striving for clarity sometimes leads to problems for Daniil. After all, by making a position simple for ourselves, we sometimes make it even simpler for the opponent.



Edouard-Dubov
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (8)
position after 19.♘d4

NEW IN CHESS

Robin van Kampen vs. Daniil Dubov. 'The young Dutchman must urgently come out of the shadow of Anish Giri and display himself.'

19...axb3? An inexcusable mistake for a high-standard tournament. It is staggering that computer programs also unanimously approve of Black's choice – this once again indicates that chess is not yet fully exhausted.

In fact Black was obliged to maintain the tension on the queenside. He should have immediately or slightly later placed his pawn on a3, for example: 19...♖g8 20.g3 (20.♕xb4? d5) 20...h5 21.♖he1 a3!, after which the mate threat on b2 restrains the white knight on d4. Black plays his rook to g4 and – waits to see what happens. In this case it would be difficult for White to make progress.

It was also important to take a practical factor into account: the French player had little time left on his clock, whereas the Russian had about an hour.

20.♗xb3 Now White's hands are completely freed for active play. His king is safe, from a comfortable position his bishop is aiming at the e6-point, and his knight is ready to jump to f5 or f3. And the breaking-up of the white pawns on the queenside can be a consolation only to a stupid computer. In a human game it is simply unreal for Black to defend such a position. As was in fact demonstrated.

Well, the prescription for improving Daniil's play is obvious: he must

become more optimistic. Believe in himself! Liberate himself and play more aggressive chess. Then those draws, as in the games with Movsesian and Van Kampen, will in future not occur in his games. And his results will improve.

It is all in our hands.

Robin van Kampen

Age 18
5½ points, 10th place

A very modest young man. A competent player, but, as it seems to me, insufficiently ambitious and not altogether self-confident. Working together with Giri undoubtedly improves Van Kampen's play, but at the same time it possibly represses him psychologically. After all, the comparison is always not in his favour. At the moment Robin merely sets off Anish's striking talent.

The young Dutchman must urgently come out of the shadow and display himself. His performance in the current tournament proved insipid and featureless. In general he displayed high-quality play, but blunders – normally in time-trouble – ruined the fruits of his labour. It is amusing that Van Kampen both committed absurd oversights himself, and successfully exploited those of others. That is, he operated as a magnet for failures! It is a long time since I have observed a piece sacrifice, such as the one which Naiditsch made against him, in a game of 2700 players.

Allow me not to give any specific examples from the Dutchman's games. In the next tournament he will play better, and only then...

Of course, I could have said a few words about the features of Robin's play, about his weaknesses, but I have long been acquainted with his current trainer Vladimir Chuchelov, and I respect him so much, that I will refrain. He knows better.

And besides, as they say here in Russia, three's a crowd.

Nils Grandelius

Age 19
4½ points, 11-12th place

An enigmatic, but very likeable person. Nils gives the visual impression of being a cheerful and carefree lad, not inclined to pore over the subtleties of chess, but at the board he is transformed. We see a genuine fighter, charged up for a battle, and at times it even appears that he has close-cropped hair and is dressed in a formal suit... ☺

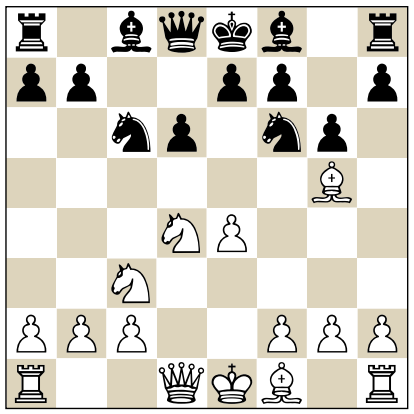
'We see a genuine fighter, charged up for a battle, and at times it even appears that he has close-cropped hair and is dressed in a formal suit...'

Grandelius's talent is obvious; he plays active chess, preferring the unclear to the obvious, and the complex to the simple. He boldly goes in for sharp variations, even when he is not well prepared for them. This is a promising approach, which I practised in my youth, as did many other representatives of the older generation. It inevitably leads to chess progress – if, of course, the games played are thoroughly analysed and serious conclusions are drawn.

In the following game the young Swede's virtues are clearly seen. An examination of it will also throw a little light on another player who interests us.

SI 27.1 – B60
Nils Grandelius
Alexander Ipatov
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (5)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗g5 g6



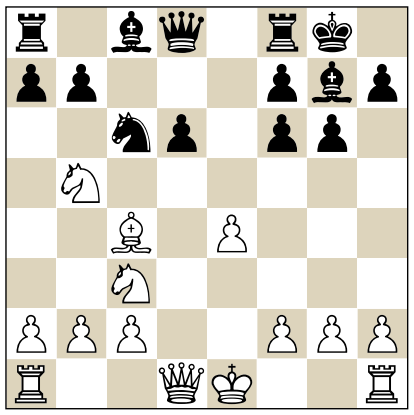
It seems that things must be altogether bad for black players in the Rauzer Variation, if time after time they have begun choosing this strange line... However, 'they' vary. There are also supporters of the usual continuations.

7.♗xf6 exf6 8.♗c4

Things are also not very cheerful for Black after 8.♗b5 ♗d7 9.♕d2 followed by White's queenside castling. Also, 8.♕d2 has been undeservedly forgotten, in my view.

However, one should not expect too much of a good thing.

8...♗g7 9.♘db5 0-0



10.♕xd6

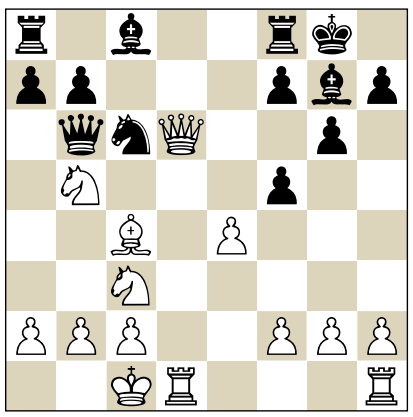
The most ambitious.

Experience has shown that after 10.0-0 f5 Black obtains good counterplay. For example, 11.exf5 ♗xf5 12.♘xd6 ♗xc3 13.bxc3 ♗xc2! 14.♕d5 ♕d7 15.♖ac1 ♖ad8! with equality, Nedev-Nabaty, Kallithea 2008.

And in the old game Tukmakov-Gur-

genidze, Kiev 1969, after 13.♘xf5 ♗xb2 14.♖b1 ♗f6 15.♘d6 Black should have simply played 15...b6!, solving all his problems.

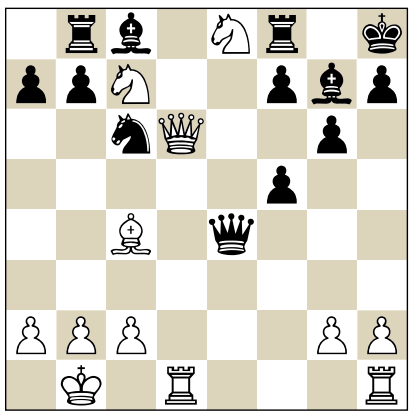
10...f5 11.0-0-0 ♕b6



An important key position of the variation. White is a pawn up, but it is not so easy to cope with the bishop on g7.

12.f4

In recent times 12.♘d5 has been fashionable, leading in amazing fashion to a peaceful conclusion: 12...♕xf2 13.♘f6+ ♔h8 14.♘c7 ♖b8 (here I suggest the fighting novelty 14...fxe4!) 15.♘fe8 ♕e3+ 16.♔b1 ♕xe4



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

17.♘xg7 ♔xg7 18.♖he1 ♕xc4 19.♘e8+ ♖xe8 20.♖xe8 ♗e6 21.♕f8+ ♔f6 22.♖xb8 ♕xa2+ 23.♔c1 ♘xb8 24.♕xb8 ♕a1+ 25.♔d2 ♕a5+ 26.♔c1 with a draw.

That was how two games concluded: Narmontas-Nabaty, Herceg Novi 2008, and Aroshidze-Vishnu, Figueres 2012.

The computer shows staggering persistence, by recommending in the diagram position the cheerless move 12.♖hf1. In such a sharp, dynamic position, is it really possible to waste a tempo and the exertions of a rook on the defence of a pitiful pawn? I don't believe it. But, as usual, to demonstrate anything with variations to the silicon brain is not possible...

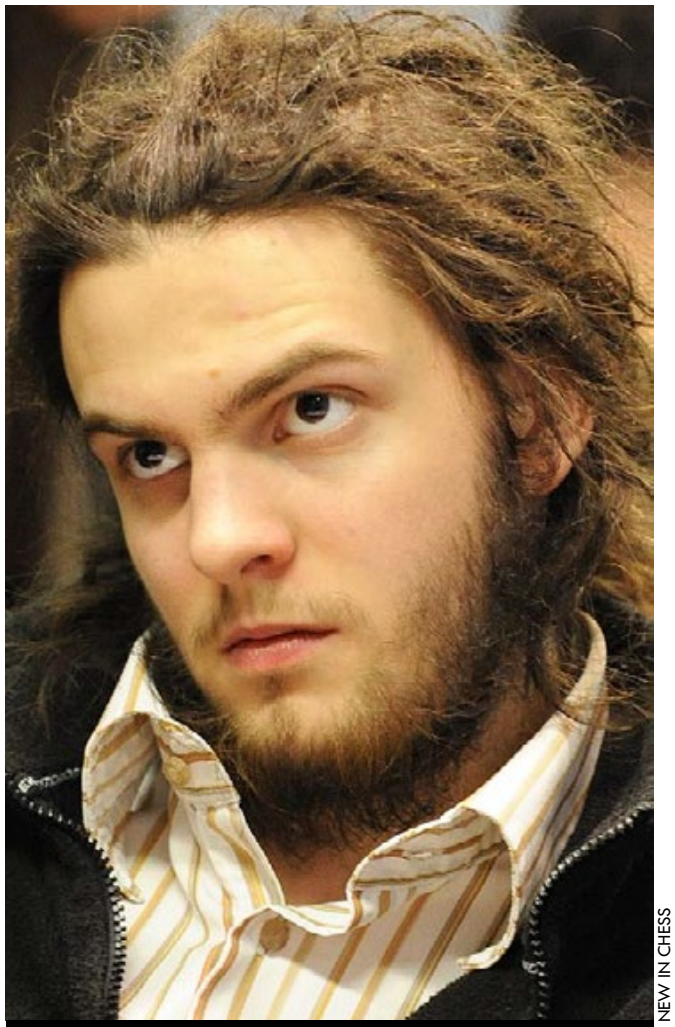
A latent point of the move is revealed after 12...fxe4 13.♘c7! ♗xc3 14.bxc3 ♖d8 15.♘xa8! – with the pawn on f2 Black does not have a queen check on e3, and he loses.

There remains 13...♖b8 14.♘7d5 ♕a5 15.♘xe4 ♗f5 (15...♔h8 16.♕c7!?) 16.♖fe1 ♖bc8 17.♗b3 ♔h8 – does Black have compensation for the pawn here? It is difficult to say. I hope that young players will test the continuation 12.♖hf1!? in practice, and show what is what.

12...fxe4 13.♘d5

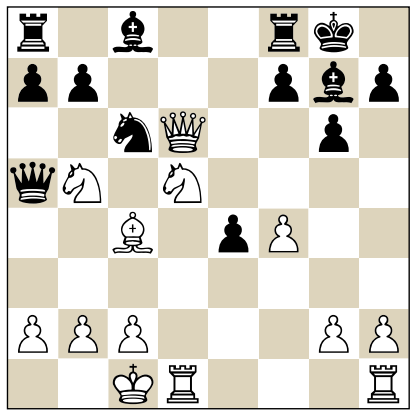
I should repeat that 13.♘c7? ♗xc3 14.bxc3 ♖d8 15.♘xa8 is bad in view of 15...♕e3+! 16.♔b2 ♖xd6 17.♖xd6 ♕c5, when White loses material.

13...♕a5



'Nils Grandelius prefers the unclear to the obvious, and the complex to the simple.'

NEW IN CHESS



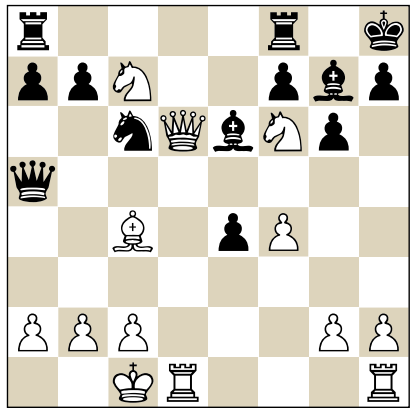
14.♘f6+

The only way. The cowardly 14.♕c7? ♗g4 15.♖de1 ♖ad8 would have handed the reins of power to Black.

14...♔h8 15.♘c7

This predictable novelty is an improvement on the obvious error by White which occurred in Suess-Kestler, Dortmund 1973: 15.♘xe4? ♗g4 (here the pawn on f2 would have been useful to White; also in the event of 15...♗f5) 16.♖d3 ♕a4 17.♘d2 ♘b4 18.♖b3 ♘xa2+ 19.♔b1 ♖ad8 20.♕a3 ♕xa3 21.♘xa3 ♖xd2 22.♖xb7 ♘c3+ 23.bxc3 ♖xg2 with a big advantage for Black.

15...♗e6!



Sasha began carrying out the correct idea, without fully understanding it. He evidently sensed that Black was obliged to play resolutely, dynamically and sacrificially, but he did not find the exact move order.

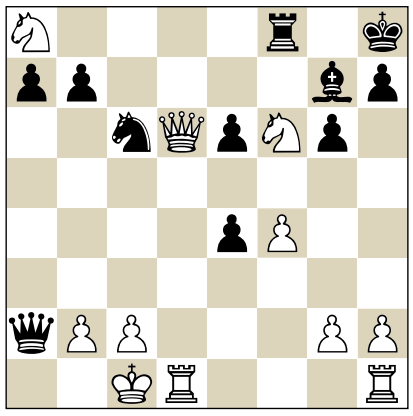
16.♗xe6 fxe6?

The loss of a very important tempo. The strong interposition 16...♖ad8! would have given Black a powerful attack for the piece – 17.♗d7 ♕xa2 18.♘cd5 (in the event of 18.c3 ♘a5! the black knight goes to c4)

18...♕a1+! 19.♔d2 ♕xb2 20.♖he1 (20.♖b1 e3+! is also dangerous for White) 20...♗xf6 21.♘xf6 ♔g7 22.♖xe4 ♕xf6 23.♕xf6+ ♔xf6 24.♔c1 ♘b8 – in the endgame a pawn down White has saving chances. And that is all.

17.♘xa8 ♕xa2

In the event of 17...♖xf6 all Black's attacks are coldly suppressed by 18.♔b1.



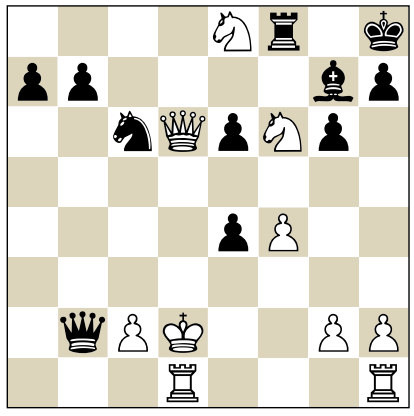
18.♘c7!

Praiseworthy coolness in the style of Larsen. As a Scandinavian, one would expect Grandelius to display it. The white king defends itself!

The faint-hearted 18.♕a3 would have allowed Black excellent saving chances: 18...♕xa3 19.bxa3 ♗xf6 20.♘c7 ♘d4 21.c3 ♘b3+ 22.♔c2 ♘c5, with quite good compensation for the exchange.

18...♕a1+ 19.♔d2 ♕xb2 20.♘ce8

The industriousness of the white knight is admirable. But it could have made an even stronger move – 20.♘xe6 ♖xf6 21.♕d5 e3+ 22.♔xe3 ♕b6+ 23.♔e4! with good winning chances.



20...♘d4?! The players both overlooked a saving combination for Black: 20...♖xe8! 21.♘xe8 ♗c3+ 22.♔e3 ♗b4! 23.♕d7 ♗c5+ 24.♔xe4 ♕xc2+ 25.♕d3 ♕xg2+ 26.♕f3 ♕c2+ with perpetual check.

However, although the variation is short, it is rather complicated. The curious geometry of the black bishop's movements is not at all obvious.

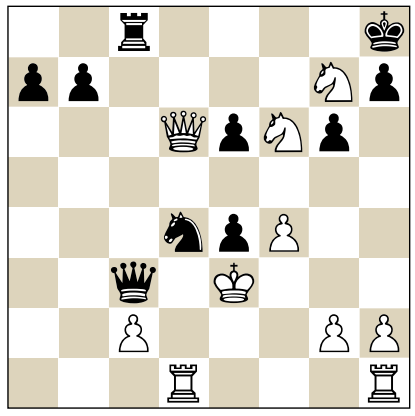
21.♘xg7 ♖c8

Strictly speaking, from the computer point of view, this is a blunder. But my human opinion is that nothing could any longer change the result, since the errors should be sought earlier.

For example, 21...♖xf6 would not have saved Black in view of 22.♖he1 with the idea 22...♔xg7 23.♕c7+ ♖f7 24.♕c3!.

22.♔e3 Forced heroism.

22...♕c3+



23.♖d3! Playing to the gallery – this happens with young players. Or perhaps Nils simply wanted to minimize the number of checks. The routine flight of the king would have won – 23.♔f2! ♕xc2+ (23...e3+ 24.♔g3 e2+ 25.♖d3) 24.♔g3 ♕c3+ 25.♔g4.

23...exd3 A bitter alternative was 23...♘xc2+ 24.♔xe4 ♕xf6 25.♕xe6 and White wins.

24.♕xd4

Without his knight Black no longer has chances of creating veiled threats.

24...♕xc2 25.♖e1 d2 26.♕xd2 ♕b3+

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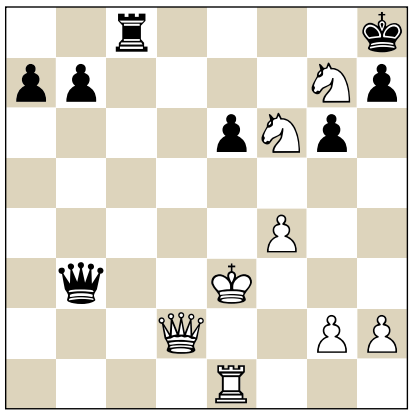
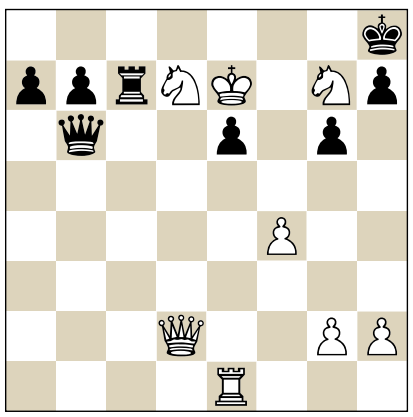
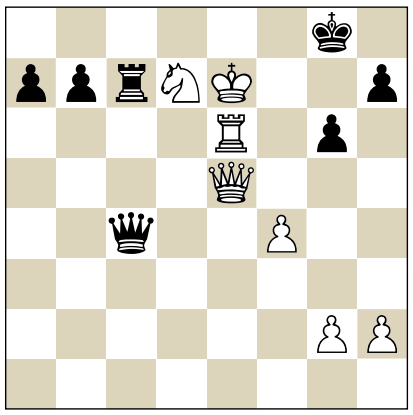


27.♔e4! The only correct decision.
27...♖c4+ 28.♔e5 ♖c5+ 29.♔d6! ♕b6+ 30.♔e7 ♖c7+ 31.♘d7

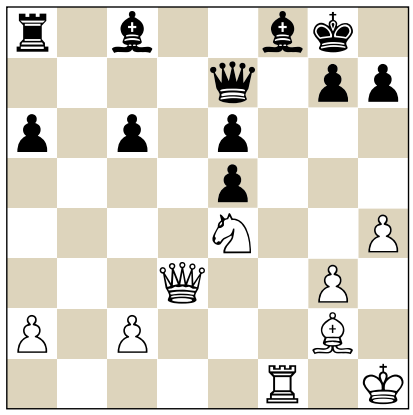


Only here, on e7, does the white king feel safe for the first time in the game.
31...♔xg7 32.♖xe6 ♕c5+ 33.♕d6 ♕c4 34.♕e5+ ♔g8



35.♔f6! A brilliant finale. The prey has become the hunter.
35...♖c6 36.♕b8+ ♖c8 37.♖e8+ Black resigned.

Despite his 19 years, an 'advanced' age for modern chess, in Nils's play one still senses a certain childishness. He still has to familiarize himself with adult chess – a world of craftiness and treachery. So that in future there should be no such occurrences:



Naiditsch-Grandelius
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (6)
position after 22.h4

White's initiative is strong, but by no means deadly.
22...h6? A terrible oversight. You cannot be so naïve, Nils!
Anyone who chooses the Najdorf should know the defensive idea 22... ♖a7!, which was most appropriate here. Black defends without any problems.

> 'As a person of old mentality, I was distressed in my contact with Sasha by his excessive respect for computer evaluations and recommendations.'

The variations are not complicated: 23.♘g5 g6 24.♖f7 ♕c5 (even simpler is 24...♖d7 25.♖xe7 ♖xd3 26.♖e8 ♖d1+ 27.♔h2 h6 28.♘xe6 ♗xe6 29. ♖xe6 ♖d6=) 25.♘e4 ♕b6 26.♖xa7 ♕xa7 27.♕d8 ♕b7, and White is unable to make any progress. If 28. ♘c5 there is 28...♕e7.
23.♘g5! Here it transpired that 23... hxg5 is met by 24.♕g6 followed by 25. ♗e4. The black king is doomed.
23...e4 24.♕xe4 hxg5 25.♕g6 Black resigned.

But, you know, I would like Grandelius to quickly improve and join the select. On condition that he does not change his hair style, does not don a jacket, does not become like everyone else – and thereby introduces into the dry atmosphere of elite tournaments a juvenile recklessness. So that many cheerful young people, on seeing Nils on the cover of a magazine or on the TV screen, may think: 'I could be in his place!'

Alexander Ipatov

Age 19
4 points, 13th place

The new under-20 World Champion had a tough time of it. The lofty title and the increased attention of his opponents restrained Sasha, and did not allow him to play expansively and aggressively. In addition he was simply in poor form.

I am sure that this is a temporary slump. The new citizen of the Turkish Republic (incidentally, when acquaintances meet Sasha, they often ask him: 'Where are you living now?') will definitely continue his advance.

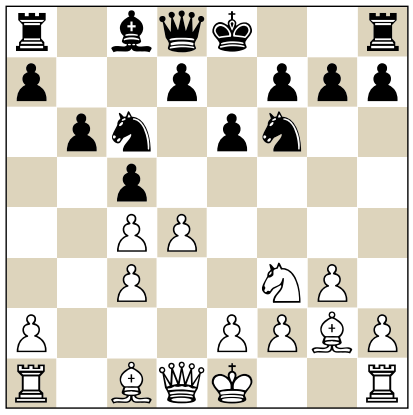
Ipatov's distinguishing qualities are opening flexibility, an ability to quickly prepare new set-ups, a good feeling for the initiative, and combinative mastery.

As a person of old mentality, I was distressed in my contact with Sasha by his excessive respect for computer evaluations and recommendations. Certain general considerations about the position are constantly parried by the indications of the monitor. But after all, in not all positions do concrete features have the greatest weight, and sometimes it is necessary to think in long-term parameters. And, the main thing, during a game players do not see the computer lines, so that with calculation alone one cannot get by.

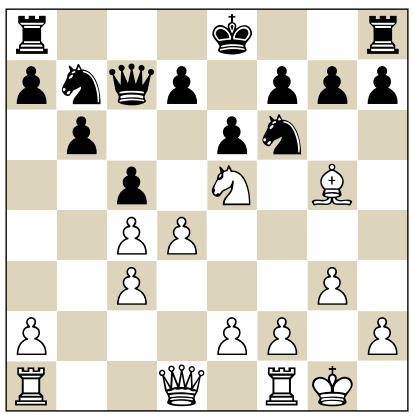
Only once in the tournament was Sasha able to display fully his best qualities.

NI 28.4 – E21
Alexander Ipatov
Predrag Nikolic
Wijk aan Zee B 2013 (9)

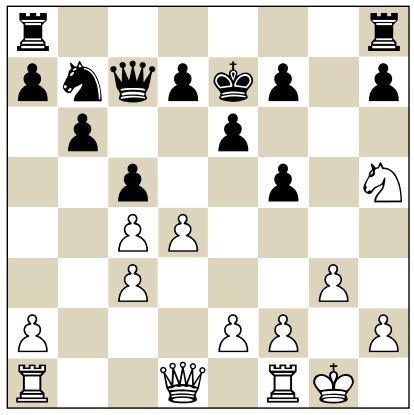
1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.d4 c5 5.g3 ♘c6 6.♗g2 ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 b6



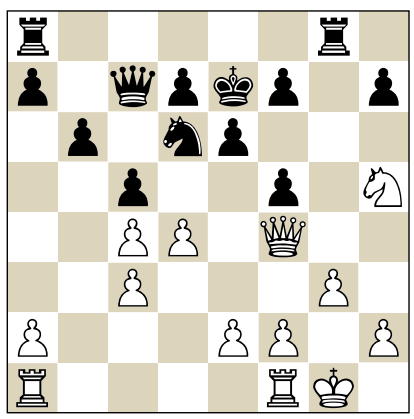
8.♘e5
A novelty. Earlier 8.♗f4 was employed. Incidentally, the computer suggests another aggressive novelty – 8.e4!?. Of course, it is not an order, but it could be checked in our leisure time.
8...♗b7 9.0-0 ♘a5 10.♗xb7
The direct 10.d5 would have been good in the event of 10...exd5?! 11.♗g5! h6 12.♗xf6 ♕xf6 13.f4 with an attack for White.
But 10...d6! 11.♕a4+ ♔f8 12.♘c6 ♕d7 is much stronger, with the unpleasant threat of ...♖a8-c8. And if 13.♕b5 there is 13...♘xc4!.
10...♘xb7 11.♗g5
White's activity forces Black to engage in a difficult defence, and for the moment he has no time to think about the c4-pawn.
11...♕c7



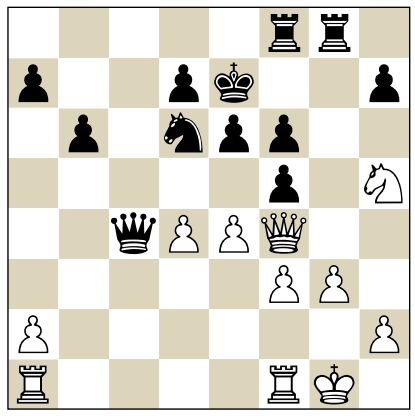
12.♗xf6 Fixing the pawn defects in Black's position.
12...gxf6 13.♘g4 f5
In his best years Predrag might have played 13...h5!? 14.♘xf6+ ♔e7 15.♘e4 h4 followed by ...♖a8-g8, obtaining a fair initiative for the pawn. But, alas, they are behind him...
14.♘f6+ ♔e7 15.♘h5



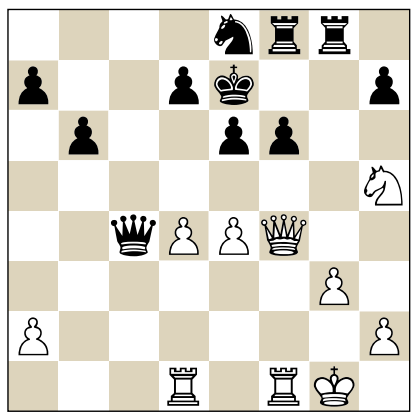
Strictly speaking, from the analytical point of view, White has not obtained anything from the opening. But the practical outcome is good: the older player has been unable to position his king comfortably, and hence for a long time his young opponent has guaranteed himself the possibility of creating threats.
15...♖hg8
Of course, not 15...cxd4 16.♕xd4!.
16.♕d2
The queen is in search of a check.
16...♘d6 17.♕f4



17...♖af8 Defend, first and foremost – that was Nikolic's natural desire. Meanwhile, Ipatov's aggressive mood could have been exploited to seize the initiative by 17...♖g4! 18.♕e5 ♘e8 19.♕e3 ♘d6 20.♕h6 (not agreeing to a draw by repetition) 20...♖g6 21.♕xh7?! (21.♕f4 is more circumspect) 21...♘e4 22.♘f4 ♕xf4 (if 22...♖g4 there is 23.♕xf5!) 23.♕xg6 fxg6 24.gxf4 ♘xc3, and in this ending, where he is the exchange up, White has to think about how to save it, since his pawns crumble one after another.
18.f3 Now the white queen is excellently placed.
18...f6 19.e4!
Beginning a direct attack.
19...cxd4 20.cxd4 ♕xc4!
If you are going to suffer, then at least not for free.



21.♖ad1!
Strong and solid play. The childish 21.e5 fxe5 22.♕h4+ ♔e8 23.♘f6+ ♖xf6 24.♕xf6 would have allowed Black powerful counterplay: 24...♕xd4+ 25.♔h1 ♖f8 26.♕g7 ♘f7, and 27.♕xh7 is bad in view of 27...e4! with threats to the white king.
21...fxe4? A strange submission. Why open the way for the rook on f1? Again Black should have looked for counter-threats. The dynamic balance would have been maintained by 21...♘b5! with the idea of playing the knight to e2.
22.fxe4 ♘e8



23.e5! ♖g6
The black king's defences are paper-

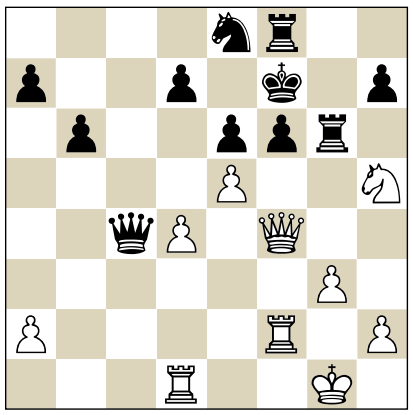
thin. It only remains for White to land one more gentle blow.

24.♖f2!

A successful combination of prophylaxis with building up the threats.

24...♔f7

After all the remaining moves Black is as though resigned to his fate. For example, 24...b5 25.♖df1 a5 26.♕e3 b4 27.♘f4 ♖g7 28.♖c1 ♕b5 29.♖c5 ♕a6 30.♘d5+ with a decisive attack for White.

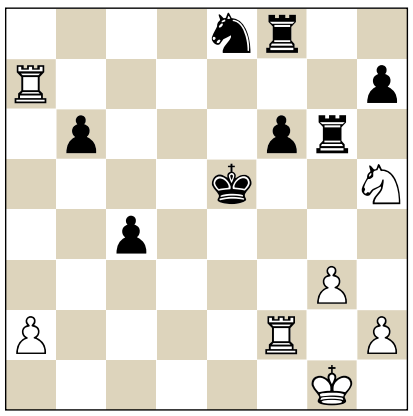


25.d5! Again a very adult approach to matters. The exchange of queens does not prevent White from continuing the attack.

25...exd5

In the event of 25...♕xf4 26.♘xf4 ♖g7 27.exf6 ♘xf6 there is the decisive 28.♖df1! with deadly pins: 28...♔e7 29.♘h5 ♖gf7 30.♘xf6 ♖xf6 31.d6+!.

26.♕xc4 dxc4 27.♖xd7+ ♔e6 28.♖xa7 ♔xe5



It is amusing, but Black's only active piece is his king.

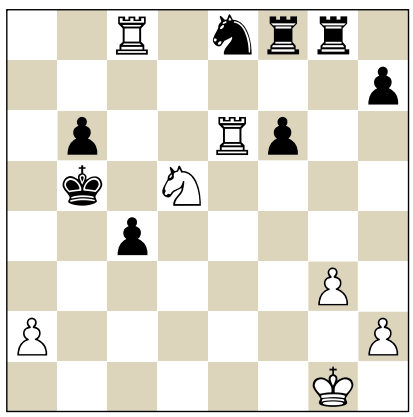
29.♘f4 ♖g7 30.♖e2+ ♔d6

Or 30...♔d4 31.♖a8!.

31.♖e6+ ♔c5 32.♖a8! ♖gg8 33.♖c8+ ♔b5 34.♘d5 34.a4+! would have decided matters more quickly,

U-20 World Champion Alexander Ipatov had a tough time of it.

but the young do not seek easy ways. They have energy to spare!



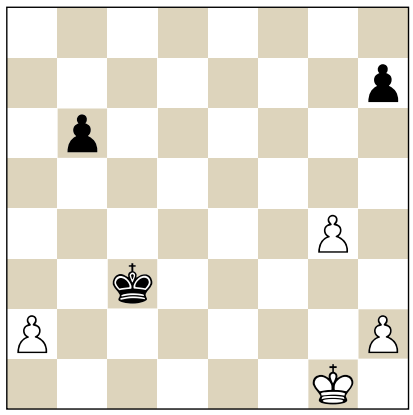
34...♘d6! 35.♖xf8 ♖xf8 36.♖xd6 ♔c5

To be honest, at this moment I thought that Ipatov was again not winning. But there is a limit even to his bad luck.

37.♖xf6 ♖xf6 38.♘xf6 c3

38...♔d4 39.♔f2!.

39.♘e4+ ♔d4 40.♘xc3 ♔xc3 41.g4!



White wins by one move. **41...♔b2**

Or 41...♔d4 42.♔f2. **42.g5**

Black resigned.

I should like to hope that Sasha will play more rarely, but relax more and study chess. I think that he still has time for self-improvement. And the annual tournament circuit will still be there for him.

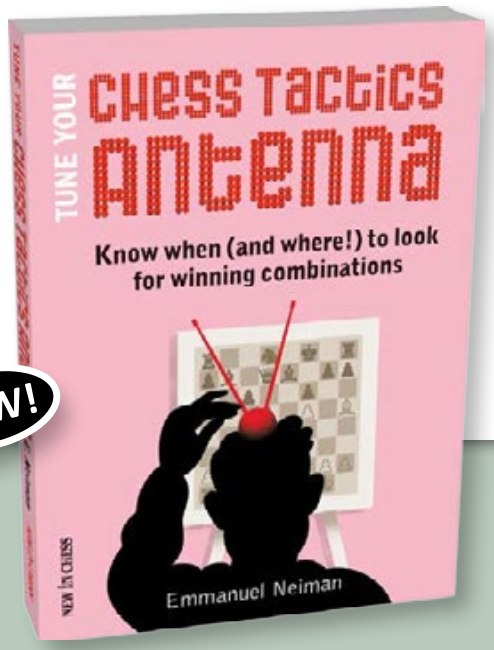
Incidentally, I address these hopes to all young players. It seems to me that they often begin too early the strict life of a professional, without first completing their chess studies. Deficiencies in education and a lack of certain basic knowledge will tell sooner or later; they will bump their head on the ceiling and will no longer be able to climb up to the stars.

P.S. For fifteen years I have spent every January in Moscow, commenting from a distance on the tournament in Wijk aan Zee, and only now have I been able to personally visit the scene of events. Many of my good acquaintances could not believe that I was there for the first time. They are accustomed to spending every January on the cold Dutch beaches.

Frankly speaking, I did not discover anything surprising. Everything was as expected. And, you know, I was pleased about this! Let it remain like this for many more years in Wijk aan Zee: the sea, the wind, a marquee with hundreds of chess players, chess sets in every restaurant, and gatherings of well-known chess figures in the press centre and at official functions. And the main thing – a universal love for chess.

The most important thing is to retain what is there. Major tournaments which have departed into the past (Linares, Amber etc.) speak eloquently of this.

The B-group was won by 27-year-old Arkadij Naiditsch, who had a better tie-break than Richard Rapport. Here is the German grandmaster's fine win against Nils Grandelius with his own notes.



NEW!

If only life was as straightforward as a book of chess exercises!

But nobody will whisper in your ear when you have reached a position that is, in fact, a tactical puzzle and all you have to do is solve it.

Emmanuel Neiman has identified a number of signals that tell you that somewhere in the position you are looking at there is a tactical blow just waiting to be found. What you need is a way to read those signals.

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NOTES BY
Arkadij Naiditsch

SI 19.3 – B80
Arkadij Naiditsch
Nils Grandelius
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (6)

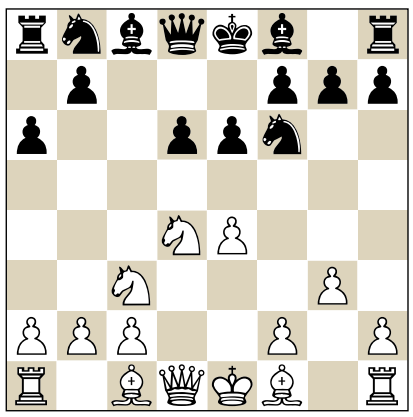
As usual, the Wijk aan Zee B-Group was a hard fighting tournament for me. Between all the 'unclear' games, I managed to win a short one against the young Swedish GM Nils Grandelius. The funny thing about the game is that, up to move 17, my opponent knew the position and was happy to reach it, knowing that the computer evaluation is about equal. When I heard this after the game, I was a bit surprised because I thought my position must have been better somehow...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.g3

The Najdorf with 6.g3 is no longer just a 'side' line. It has got more and more attention of late, even at the highest level. The idea of the move is simple: to put the bishop on g2 and to play f4, reaching a sort of Scheveningen 'a tempo up'.

6...e6

Probably the main reply here is 6...e5. It is hard to say whether White obtains any advantage, but many of the positions are 'still' not well analysed, which makes the play freer and less burdened by preparation.



7.♗g2 ♗e7

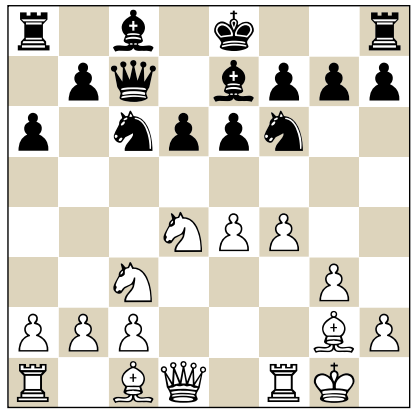
Now we have reached a position that we often see in the Classical Scheveningen, where White usually plays f4, ♗f3, g4, ♗g2. In comparison, White obviously saves a full tempo here by playing g3-♗g2.

In my opinion, 7...♗d7 followed by ...♘c6 deserves attention.

8.0-0 ♕c7 9.f4 ♘c6

A normal-looking move which immediately leads to a very forced series of moves.

9...0-0 would have been a more careful set-up for Black.

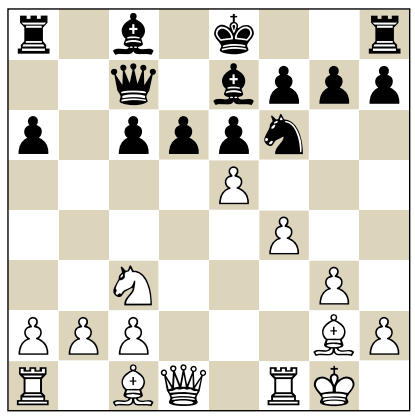


10.♘xc6!

I thought for a while before taking on c6, as it is a big decision to make, because things become very forced. The simple 10.♗e3 was a normal alternative to continue the game. Another point, which irritated me a bit, was that my opponent played all his moves instantly.

10...bxc6 11.e5

Of course, only this follow-up can be the idea of taking 10.♘xc6. In case I don't play 11.e5, Black's pawn structure is very good. For example, after 11.♗e3 d5! Black is completely fine.



11...dxe5 Instead, 11...♘d5?! just leads to a clearly worse position for Black: 12.exd6 ♗xd6 13.♘e4 followed by c4 and White is doing very well.

NEW IN CHESS

The winners of the 2013 Tata Steel B-Group, Richard Rapport and Arkadij Naiditsch, who had the better tiebreak.

12.fxe5 ♘d7

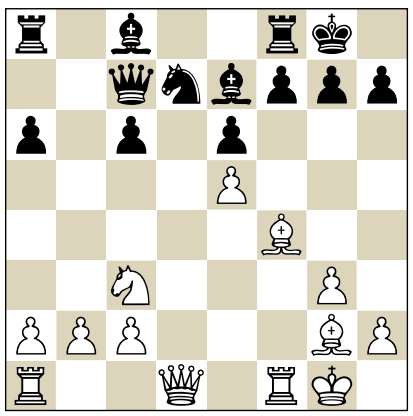
Black's pawn structure looks horrible, but the white pawn on e5 is going to fall, which lends the position a pretty forced nature and Nils continued to bang out his moves.

13.♗f4

Developing the bishop and at the same time protecting the pawn on e5 cannot be a bad idea.

13...0-0

Now Black wants to take the pawn e5. At the same time another idea has appeared: winning the e5-pawn connected with the move ...g5.



14.♘e4

When I played this move, I was a bit scared that I might have blundered something. Till here my opponent had played all his moves instantly. Still, it seemed to me that White should be better somehow. I saw no other move than taking on e5 now for Black. My next move could be 15.♕h5.

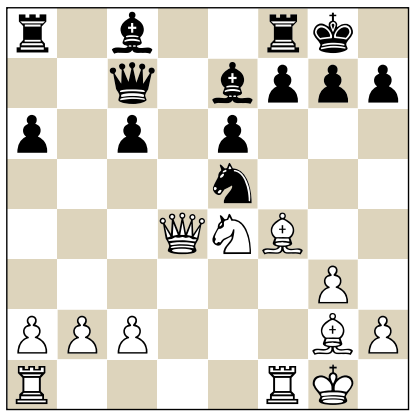
For a while I thought about playing 14.♔h1, but I doubt whether I have anything after 14...♖b8 15.b3 ♗b7.

14...♘xe5

And my opponent continued to play very fast, which kept annoying me a bit. Can this be a good position for Black?!

15.♕d4

When I played this, I really hoped I had not missed some trick.

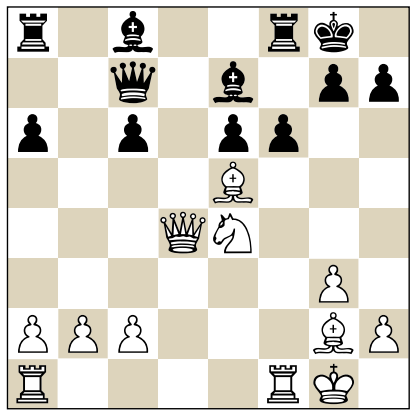


15...f6

And when I saw my opponent play this move a tempo, I was very happy.

16.♗xe5

The first critical moment of the game: what to recapture with on e5?



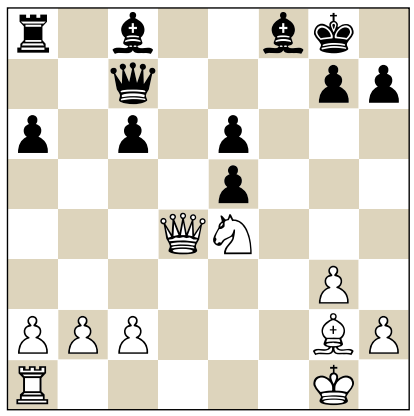
16...fxe5

The first time in the game that Nils started thinking.

In case of 16...♕xe5 17.♕xe5 fxe5 18.♖ad1 I think White has a better endgame. White's plan is simple: to play b3 and c4 next and to take the king to e3. The bishop on c8 is really a horrible piece: it doesn't look as if the bishop is going anywhere any time soon. Even in case Black manages to exchange both pairs of rooks, which will not be easy, I think White still will keep some winning chances in the endgame.

17.♖xf8+ ♗xf8

Here I had a long think. To me it seemed that Black's position was extremely dangerous and that I should have a chance to 'end' the game very soon.



18.♕c4!

A nice move, but not a very difficult one to make. I hesitated mainly between 18.♕d3 and 18.♕c4, both of which seemed to be promising. If we look at the position: White is a pawn down, but he has a very strong knight on e4 and is better developed, which always gives you hope of being able to

NEW!

Viktor Bologan: English 1.c4 e5 – For Black

In order to confuse their opponents many strong players have nowadays started to play the English Opening 1.c4 with White, breaking the golden rule of occupying the centre on the very first move. On his new DVD, Bologan recommends you to counter with the classical move 1…e5. Except for 3…d5, which deserves a separate DVD, the GM from Moldavia describes the main plans for Black such as ...Bb4, ...Bc5 and even ...Nd4. Of course 2.Nc3 Bb4 is not missed out which was for a long time played by Moldovan students of Chebanenko. “Before starting to make this DVD I was sure that Black had problems in this line, but to my surprise I found a way to equalise! So, play 1.c4 e5!”

29,90 €

Karsten Müller: Endgames 12 – Rook against Knight

The more reduced the material, the more important it is to correctly assess the potential of your own and the enemy pieces. This is particularly true in endgames with unbalanced material. The new DVD continues a discussion of asymmetrical material balances which started in volume 11. This time the endgame expert explains endgames with rook against knight, two rooks against rook and knight, rook against bishop and knight etc. These endgames allow one to study the important characteristics „coordination“ and „harmony of the pieces“ in detail and lead to interesting practical insights. Especially the geometry of the knight becomes evident. Don’t miss Karsten Muellers demonstration of the „knight check shadow “. It will help you save your games – not only in the endgame!

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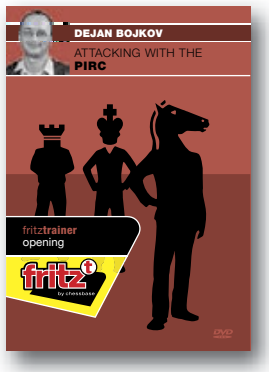
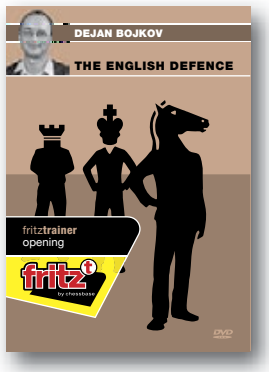
Dejan Bojkov: Attack with the Pirc-Defence



There were ups and downs in the appearance of the Pirc (1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6) in tournament practice. Many people considered it dubious. However, the Pirc survived and it is coming back into fashion nowadays again. The reasons for that are the flexible nature of the position and the variety of possibilities that both sides have. The Bulgarian grandmaster Dejan Bojkov offers an aggressive repertoire for the second player in this new DVD. Black risks more than usual but hopes for higher dividends in return for the risk. The original analyses on the DVD will help the reader control the risk involved. Video running time: 4 hours 29 min. 27,90 €

Dejan Bojkov: The English Defence



In the 1970s a group of strong English players (Miles, Speelman, Keene above all and later Short) developed a slightly unusual opening starting after the moves 1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6. The original character of the play as well as the good preparation by the aforementioned grandmasters led to the recognition of this setup as the English Defence. This opening, which is still very young and unexplored, has recently attracted some top players (Morozevich, Ponomariov, Mamedyarov) who have made good use of it in their games. Dejan Bojkov explores the line in detail and supplies you with all the information you require in order to be successful with the English Defence yourself! 27,90 €

Opening Encyclopaedia 2013

This DVD features the complete coverage of all opening sectors, offering an optimal start for opening training. Many well-known specialists have made contributions in their field of expertise, such as Anand, Avrukh, Krasenkow, Kritz, Kuzmin, Marin, Moskalenko, Postny, Ribli, Stohl and more. The DVD contains a separate directory with more than 700 special theory databases from ChessBase Magazine. For each of 500 opening sectors according to ECO standard there is at least one opening survey, so that the database is the ideal tool for building up a complete opening repertoire. The game database includes 4.3 million games, about 80.000 of them with annotations. 99,90 €

Update from 2012: 49,90 €

Sam Collins: Know the Terrain Vol. 4: The Advance French Structure

In this DVD, Sam Collins looks at the Advance French Structure (white pawns on d4 and e5 against black pawns on d5 and e6, with an open c-file) which, while characteristic of 3.e5 in the French, is also typical of other French variations, the Advance Caro-Kann, the Queen's Indian, the Catalan, the Slav and various Anti-Sicilians. The blocked centre forces play to the wings. White will normally concentrate on furthering his kingside ambitions, supported by the space advantage conferred by his pawn on e5, either by piece play or by the typical pawn advances h4-h5 and f4-f5. Black, for his part, seeks queenside counterplay, simplification, or a well-timed break with ...f6 leading to a central battle. The relatively closed nature of the positions leads to strategic play where knowledge of typical plans for both sides is of decisive importance.

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Sam Collins: Know the Terrain Vol. 5: The Philidor Structure 27,90 €

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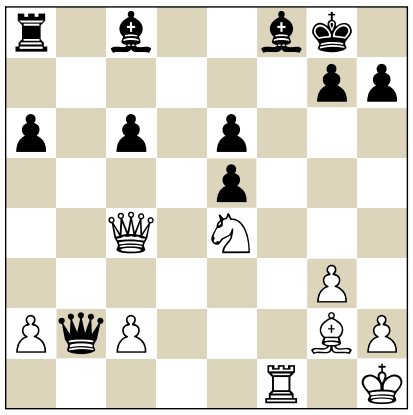
launch an attack. Black's pawn structure is really very bad, and the bishop on c8 is a 'dead' piece. All this should give White a clear plus in my opinion, but the computer gives an evaluation here of around 0.00, which is probably why my opponent went for this position.

18...♕b6+

Nils is playing 'all or nothing', and I think this is the right choice for Black here, even if it probably leads to a lost position. Black is going to win a second pawn, to make 'sure' that at least his suffering is compensated for.

19.♔h1 ♕xb2 20.♖f1

Things are getting darker around Black's king...

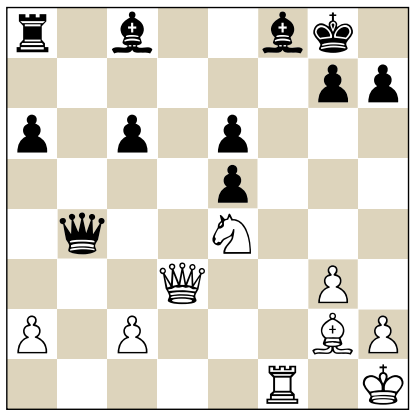


20...♕b4

During the game I was more concerned about the other continuation for Black: 20...♕b5 21.♕c3 (White is taking the queen closer to Black's king) 21...♖a7! (a typical and strong defensive idea. Black's rook is back in the game) 22.♕f3 ♕b4. Here, I wasn't sure how to continue. I could play 23.♕h5, but I could also go 23.c4. I was very pleased when I found this latter move. Black cannot stop White from playing c5: after 23...♕e7 24.c5 White's position really looks nice! I was sure to have at least 'enough' compensation for my two pawns.

21.♕d3!

Not falling to the temptation to win three pawns... After 21.♕xc6 ♗b7 22.♕xe6+ ♔h8 23.♕xe5, I think Black has pretty good chances to make a draw. I cannot stop Black from playing ...♗xe4, and the opposite-coloured bishop position that arises could very well end in a draw.

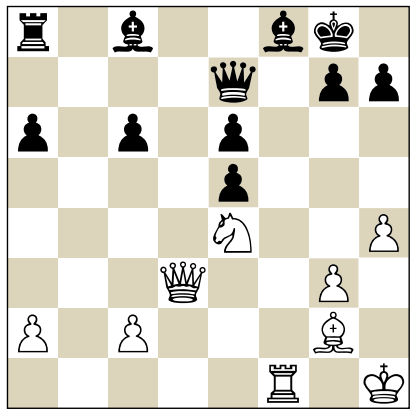


21...♕e7

As White wanted to play ♘g5 next... However, perhaps a better way to fight for Black would have been 21...h6, but it's hard to make such a move in a practical game...: 22.♘d2 e4 23.♗xe4, and I think White should be clearly better here.

22.h4

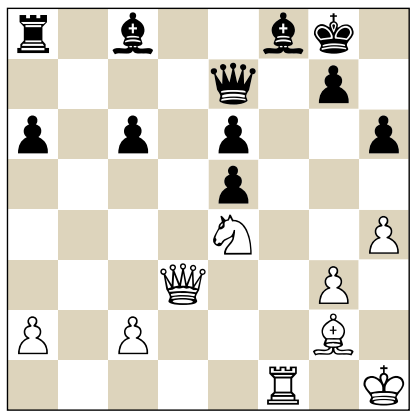
Simple and good. I want to continue with ♘g5 and at the same time I am creating a better place for the white king on h2. Meanwhile, the idea of ♗h3 is getting stronger as well.



22...h6

When I saw Nils playing this, I thought 'Yes' ☺. Now the game sees a pretty finish.

More resilient, but very hard to find was 22...♖a7! 23.♘g5 g6 24.♖f7, and it seems that White is winning, but 24...♖d7! keeps Black in the game: 25.♖xe7 ♖xd3 26.♖c7, and White has a large advantage in this endgame because of the horrible bishop on c8.



23.♘g5! After playing this move I looked at Nils's reaction. I think he was shocked...

23...e4 Giving up the e-pawn doesn't change anything.

24.♕xe4 hxg5 25.♕g6

And Black can't stop White from playing ♗e4. Such games are good for your motivation and inspire you to seek further fights in the tournament! ■

Wijk aan Zee B 2013 — cat. XV

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		TPR
1	Arkadij Naiditsch	IGM GER 2708	*	1	1	½	½	½	1	0	1	0	1	½	1	1	9	2755
2	Richard Rapport	IGM HUN 2621	0	*	0	1	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	9	2761
3	Jan Smeets	IGM NED 2615	0	1	*	½	½	1	0	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	8½	2731
4	Sergei Movsesian	IGM ARM 2688	½	0	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	8½	2725
5	Daniil Dubov	IGM RUS 2600	½	½	½	½	*	0	1	1	0	½	½	1	½	1	7½	2679
6	Romain Edouard	IGM FRA 2686	½	0	0	0	1	*	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	0	7	2644
7	Jan Timman	IGM NED 2566	0	0	1	½	0	½	*	½	½	0	1	1	1	1	7	2653
8	Sergey Tiviakov	IGM NED 2655	1	0	½	½	0	0	½	*	½	1	½	1	1	0	6½	2618
9	Maxim Turov	IGM RUS 2630	0	½	0	0	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	6	2591
10	Robin van Kampen	IGM NED 2581	1	½	½	0	½	0	1	0	½	*	0	0	½	1	5½	2566
11	Nils Grandelius	IGM SWE 2572	0	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	1	*	0	1	0	4½	2514
12	Predrag Nikolic	IGM BIH 2619	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	1	1	*	0	1	4½	2510
13	Alexander Ipatov	IGM TUR 2587	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	1	*	½	4	2482
14	Sipke Ernst	IGM NED 2556	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	½	*	3½	2450

Harry Pillsbury

A Week in the Gruelling Exhibition Life of Harry Pillsbury

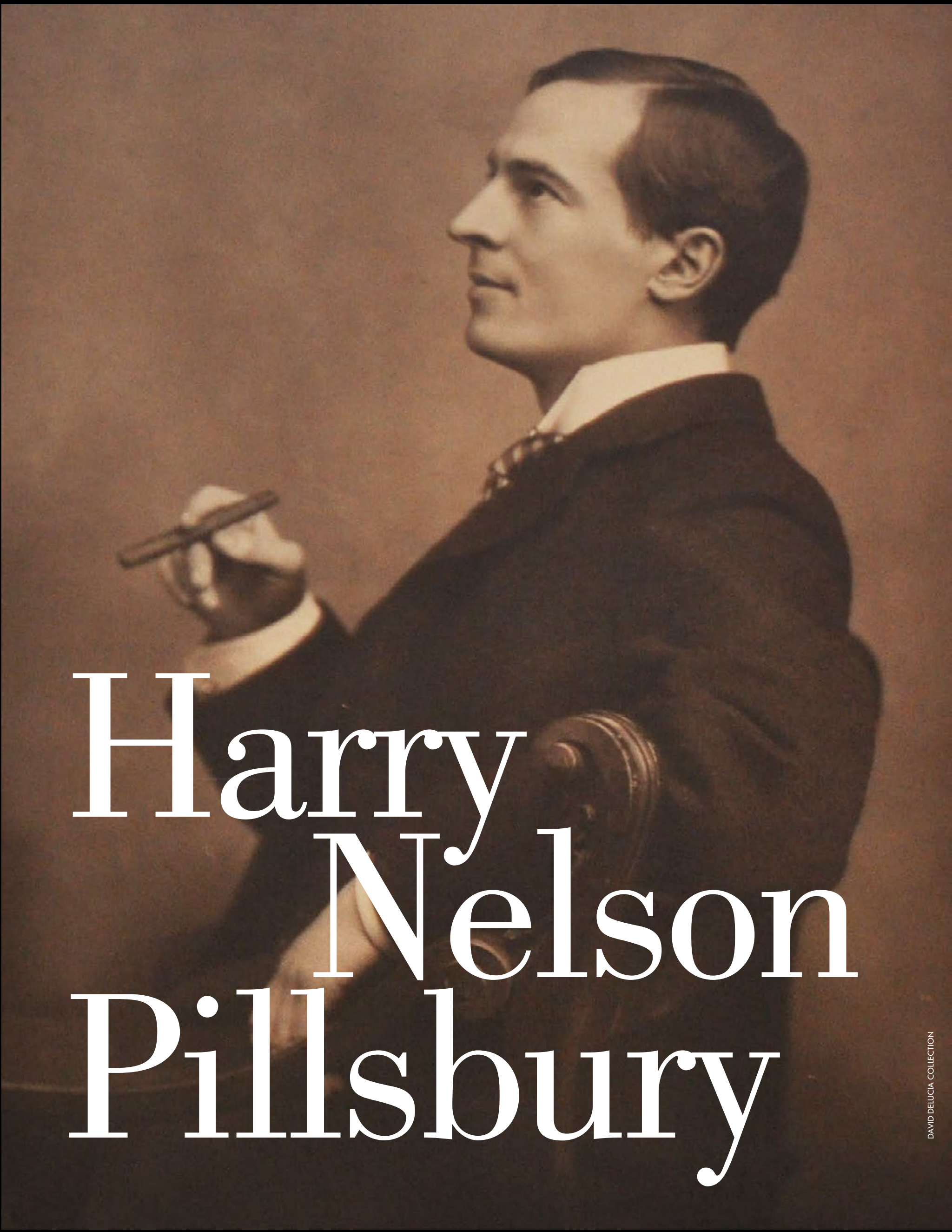
After a decade of triumph followed torturous years of physical and mental decay that ended in Harry Pillsbury's untimely death at the age of 33.

John S. Hilbert & Olimpiu G. Urcan

The headaches were getting worse. The nights, longer. The momentary confusion baffling, especially for a master juggling a dozen or more games in his head while playing whist. Was he exhausted? Was he going mad? Would going mad one day seem, in comparison, a blessing? Certainly madness, let alone death, should not occupy the mind of a thirty-year-old.

General paresis, Harry Nelson Pillsbury's final diagnosis, is insidious: slow, relentless, a wily and treacherous opponent no one outplayed. Not in 1903. A Machiavelli of the mind, over time, paresis twists sanity apart. Almost unknown today in countries where syphilis receives treatment through antibiotics, in Pillsbury's time its cause was unclear. Some considered its torturous unfolding a sign of mental failure, even of moral decay. Its symptoms attack a person's integrity on multiple fronts. Mental functioning erodes, as the ability to calculate and rely on short-term memory diminishes. Personality alters, as irritability, moodiness and anger increase. And the self dissolves, as delusion and hallucination wrack psyche and soul. For a genius like Pillsbury, whose livelihood depended on the sharpness of his mental abilities, the congeniality of his personality, and the steadiness of his thought, no other illness could have been more excruciating.

Paresis moves at glacial speed. Fifteen or twenty years can pass before its culminating ravishes overwhelm its victim. Just when the deterioration and self-betrayal started for one of the finest minds to ever devote itself to chess is unknown, but clearly the suffering had begun well before Pillsbury returned to the United States in 1903. For the American master, the world was slowly shrinking, both within himself and without. In inverse proportion to his own shortening horizon, the modern American world of September 1903 was growing exponentially. That July, San Francisco and Manila were connected by the first Pacific telegraph cable. The next month, a Packard, the



Harry Nelson Pillsbury

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first automobile ever to do so, drove cross-country in the opposite direction, from San Francisco to New York. Had Pillsbury made his nearly annual, national exhibition tour less than two years later, he might well have travelled part of it by car. Over 80,000 automobiles would crisscross the nation's wretched roads by 1905. But by then Pillsbury would be in no condition to ply his trade, let alone maintain the difficult pace a chess master in America in the first decade of the twentieth century needed to scrape a living. And before the year after that was out, he would be dead, cut down at thirty-three.

1903 had not been Pillsbury's best year, although a good one by most players' standards. In February and March he finished third at Monte Carlo, behind Tarrasch and Maroczy, but ahead of Schlechter. And as for his national reputation, he finished six and a half points ahead of his nearest American competitor, Marshall. In May his fourth place showing at Vienna behind Chigorin, Marshall and Marco could be written off, as it was a King's Gambit tourney, a specialty event far from showcasing Pillsbury's strength. The following weeks found him in England, giving his famous performances, before sailing for New York on 18 July 1903, but there were also suggestions that his concentration and peace of mind were being disturbed by symptoms of intrusive changes in his thinking.

A year and a half away from home is a long time for anyone. Summer in New York and Philadelphia, the latter long by then Pillsbury's home, was not the place or time to give much thought to chess, at least before air conditioning. The smallish framed master – his passport application records him as standing just over 170 cm – had two months to recover his energy, and perhaps to further seek medical help regarding the disturbing symptoms that were beginning to give a new form to his thoughts.

He also had to put together a tour. Healthy or not, rested or not, the man needed a livelihood. On 20 September 1903 the *New York Tribune* announced Pillsbury's first exhibition since his return from overseas would be held the following afternoon at the Brooklyn Chess Club. Pillsbury was beginning a nationwide tour ranging from the east coast to San Francisco, playing simultaneous exhibitions, interspersed with single games against stronger club players, as well as playing handicap games, draughts, and, of course, his signature blindfold performances.

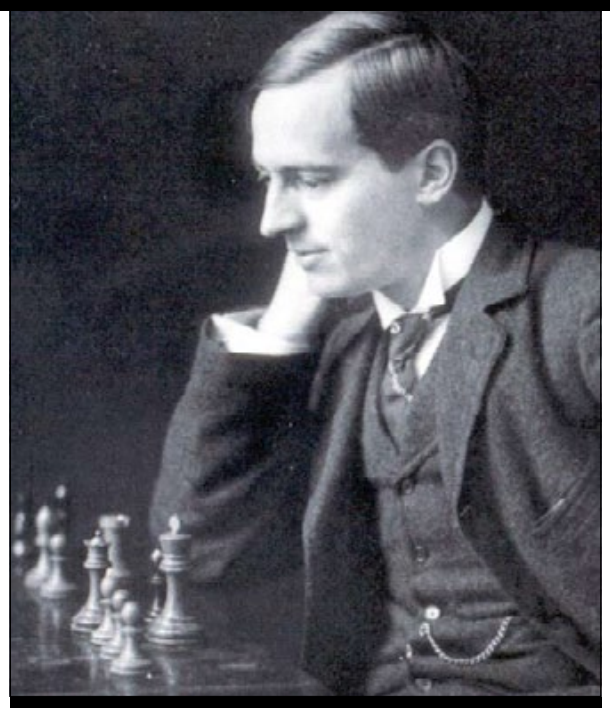
And what better place to start his 1903-1904 tour than the Brooklyn Chess Club? Housed in its rooms at 146 Montague Street, the Brooklyn club had seen Pillsbury's transformation from amateur to international sensation following Hastings 1895. The road from 1893 to 1903 had been anything but smooth, but for the amiable, pleasant-featured young man the years had brought their share of triumph and applause, if not wealth.

Certainly not wealth. The life of an American chess master a hundred years ago was anything but financially rewarding. Work-driven, Puritan-bred Americans had difficulty considering chess, a mere game, a real profession. Those who did play regularly, with rare exception, carefully called their efforts, somewhat paradoxically, strenuous play for the busy mind at rest. Max Judd played, but his cloak factory in St. Louis and his years as Consul General in Vienna during Grover Cleveland's second Presidential Administration marked him as a businessman. Showalter had his Kentucky farm and accumulated wealth. Average middleclass Americans, who played the game in cities and towns across the nation, held regular jobs in a cornucopia of occupations, from railway clerks to lawyers to printers' helpers to doctors. Musicians, journalists and artists all played the game, but very few lived through chess. Those who had tried, like Steinitz and Mackenzie, had continued playing well after their health argued against it. So would Pillsbury.

> 'Healthy or not, rested or not, the man needed a livelihood.'

Unlike Steinitz, who relied extensively on his writing, and unlike Mackenzie, who supplemented his income by accepting positions running chess cafes and as the Manhattan Chess Club's resident master, Pillsbury by 1903 generated the majority of his limited income through extended tours. Even under the best of circumstances, his travel, pace and play required great stamina. Combine this with maintaining a friendly and engaging demeanour no matter how great the strain or how tiring the circumstances – after all, a travelling master's work was providing fun on demand – and add to that declining health, and it is a wonder Pillsbury could accomplish as much as he did.

Pillsbury's inaugural stop for his last tour saw him engaged by the Brooklyn Chess Club for a series of events from Monday afternoon through late Saturday night, 21-26 September 1903. The afternoon and evening schedule would have appealed to Pillsbury, who liked studying chess until two or three in the morning, and who abhorred early rising. Newspaper coverage of his stay, largely but not exclusively given by Hermann Helms in his long-running *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* chess column, supplemented by daily reports, gives us insight into the demands placed on a master whose livelihood depended as much on his congeniality as on his chess skill. The games that remain, several of which have never appeared before in collections, offer tantalizing if at times sad glimpses into his mind.



‘Pillsbury liked studying chess until two or three in the morning, and abhorred early rising.’

In September Pillsbury took the train up to New York City, where he put himself up in a room at the New Amsterdam Hotel in Manhattan, at the corner of 4th Avenue and 21st Street. A nice enough hotel, according to reference works of the time, the New Amsterdam as late as 1907 offered rooms at a dollar a day per person – with bath, two dollars and up. From there he took a streetcar down to the Brooklyn Bridge, likely crossed over on bridge car, and made his way to 146 Montague, a five-story structure that in addition to housing the Brooklyn Chess Club provided homes to various businesses, such as a photographic studio and an insurance office. Both Pillsbury and Helms, and no doubt several others, had used the address for chess mailing purposes for some time, Pillsbury for at least the past three years. The club, now boasting nearly 200 members, had taken up residence there on 1 May 1898.

On Monday afternoon, 21 September 1903, Pillsbury entered the club rooms. Although little activity was expected at the club initially, the rooms filled over time. Four boards were set up, and play began against three individuals and one consultation team of two. The mixes of boards and opponents throughout the week would strike a modern master as highly unusual, although for the times it was simply another part of the accommodation a performer like Pillsbury made for his audience. Spectators crowded around, sometimes almost on top of the players, talking and suggesting moves. As soon as one game ended another began, and in all Pillsbury played nine games at the four boards, facing several men who would take part in the activities throughout the week. Hermann Helms lost two games to his young friend, while a fellow named Charles Curt managed a draw out of his two.

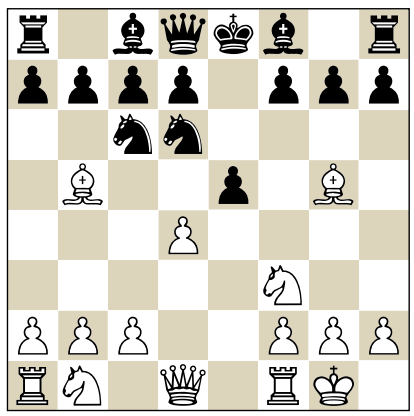
But the feature attraction was Pillsbury’s evening game against Clarence Seamen Howell, an opponent well known to him. A Brooklyn native, the twenty-two-year-old Howell, who fashionably parted his hair down the middle, was an obvious club choice to meet Pillsbury in an individual encounter. Already a three year veteran of the American Cable team, Howell had drawn Pillsbury in one of their two tournament games at Buffalo 1901 (where Pillsbury dominated, 8-0, with 2 draws), while also defeating Marshall twice. Two years after their current exhibition game, Howell would win the Brooklyn club’s championship, and four years later the championship of New York State. For years he provided Helms and Cassel with annotations for their jointly produced *American Chess Bulletin*.

In their Monday night encounter, Pillsbury played the Berlin Defence to the Ruy Lopez, allegedly ‘as he does not believe,’ Helms wrote, ‘in the efficacy of 3...a6.’ Pillsbury would tweak Helms for this misstatement in short order, but the game that unfolded that Monday night was an exciting one for club members to witness. And yet Pillsbury, on the verge of a nice win, inexplicably missed a move at his forty-ninth turn that it is hard to imagine the Hero of Hastings overlooking. We are unaware of the game ever appearing in a Pillsbury game collection.

RL 7.4 – C67
Clarence S. Howell
Harry Pillsbury
Brooklyn Chess Club (Exhibition Game) 21 September 1903

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6
Historical records indicate Pillsbury favoured this defence over the 3...a6 alternative, but not to the extent Helms suggested in his game comments. He used this line nearly twenty times in official tournament games starting in 1896. For instance, he used it to score convincingly against Jackson W. Showalter in their 1897 match, finishing 5-2 against the Kentuckian when playing this line. By comparison, Pillsbury played 3...a6 in only six serious tournament games between 1900 and 1902. But he did play it, as Helms would soon be reminded.

4.0-0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗g5
The main line – popular to this day – is 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8.



6...♗e7 6...f6!? is perfectly playable: 7.dxe5 ♘xb5! 8.♗h4 ♗e7 9.a4 fxe5 10.♗xe7 ♘xe7 11.axb5 d6, with very pleasant play for Black.

7.♗xc6
7.♗xe7 ♕xe7 8.dxe5 ♘xb5 9.a4 d6 10.axb5 ♘xe5 11.♘d4?! was a line played by Showalter against Pillsbury in their second, 1898 match. Pillsbury won.

7...bxc6

At St. Petersburg 1896, Lasker continued with 7...♗xg5 against Pillsbury: 8.dxe5 dxc6 9.♘xg5 ♕xg5 10.exd6 cxd6 11.♖e1+ ♗e6 12.♕xd6 ♖d8 13.♕a3 a6 14.♘c3 ♕e7 and the game ended in a draw after 50 moves.

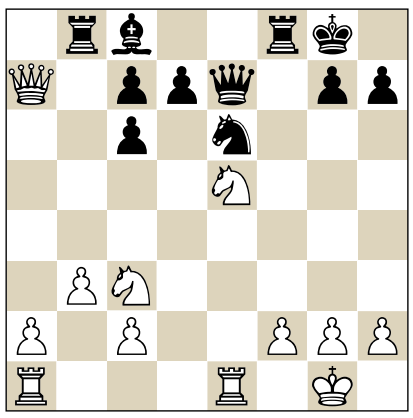
8.dxe5 ♘b7 9.♗xe7 ♕xe7 10.♘c3 0-0 11.♖e1 ♘c5 12.♕d2 ♖b8 13.b3 f6 It's fairly clear Pillsbury was following the plan that appeared in Lasker-Pollock, New York 1893.

14.♕d4 As Lasker showed against Pollock, 14.♖ad1 could be considered more logical.

14...fxe5 15.♘xe5

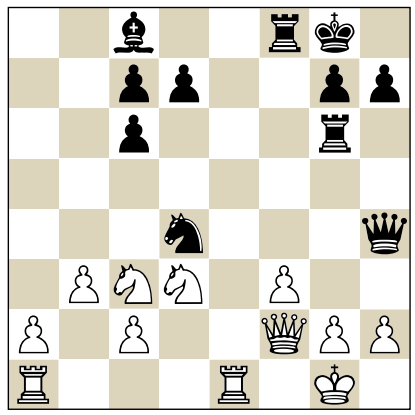
After 15.♖xe5 ♘e6 16.♕xa7 d6 17.♖e3 ♖b6 18.♕a4 ♕f7 19.♕h4 ♕f5 20.♖c1 ♘f4 21.a4 c5 Black seems to have sufficient compensation.

15...♘e6 16.♕xa7



16...♖b4!? Instead of the more obvious 16...♖b6 or 16...♗b7, Pillsbury's ambitious idea is to transfer the rook to the kingside.

17.♘d3 ♖g4 18.♕e3 ♕h4 19.f3 ♖g6 20.♕f2 ♘d4?!



21.♖e4

21.♕xh4 ♘xf3+ 22.♔h1 ♘xh4 23.♖e2 ♘f5 would have clearly favoured Black, but after 21.♘e5! Pillsbury would have been forced to play 21...♖h6 22.♕xh4 ♖xh4 23.♖ac1 d6 24.♘d3 ♗f5 25.♖e7 ♖f7, probably with little, if any, compensation.

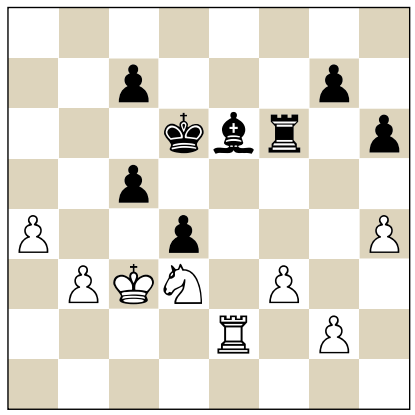
21...♕xf2+ 22.♔xf2 ♘xc2 23.♖c1 ♖d6 24.♖xc2 ♖xd3 25.♖e3 ♖xe3 26.♔xe3 ♖e8+ 27.♔d4 d6

The position is equal, yet Howell may have very well believed he had a clear edge due to his a-pawn.

28.♘e4 c5+ 29.♔c3 ♗f5 30.♖e2 ♔f8 31.♘g3 ♗e6

Avoiding exchanges while hoping for some complications later on.

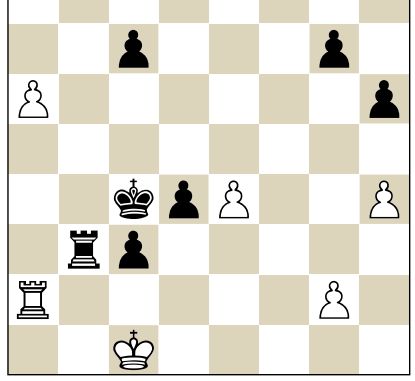
32.♘e4 h6 33.♘f2 ♔e7 34.h4 ♔d7 35.♘d3 ♖f8 36.♖d2 ♔c6 37.♖e2 ♖f6 38.a4 d5 39.♔b2 ♔d6 40.♔c3 d4+



41.♔b2?! c4! 42.♘f2 c3+ 43.♔c2 ♗f5+ 44.♘e4+ ♔d5 45.♔c1 ♖b6! 46.a5 ♖xb3 47.♖a2 ♗xe4

Hermann Helms was right to recommend here 47...d3! but the text move should have won too.

48.fxe4+ ♔c4 49.a6



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49...d3??
Here Pillsbury missed the winning line. Best was 49...♖b8! with a clear win: 50.♖a4+ ♔d3 51.♖a5 ♖f8 52.♖f5 ♖a8 53.♖a5 ♔xe4 54.♔c2 c5 and Black's central pawns are self-sufficient. As the winning path would not ordinarily have been difficult for Pillsbury to fathom, one may legitimately wonder about his difficulty in wrapping the game up. Are we seeing a simple error, the rust of several months layoff from chess? Would Pillsbury have experienced such a lapse the year before? Five years before? We will never know for sure.
50.a7!
And so White is saved, as a perpetual cannot be avoided.
50...d2+ 51.♔c2 ♖b1
51...♖b2+ would have not worked either: 52.♖xb2 cxb2 53.a8♕ b1♕+ 54.♔xd2 ♕d3+ 55.♔e1 ♕g3+ 56.♔f1 ♕f4+, and the game is drawn.
52.♖a4+ ♔c5 53.♖a5+ ♔c4
Draw.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 27 September 1903

The game against Howell lasted long into the night, and Pillsbury still had his commute back to Manhattan. How long was that trip for a man wondering about his own mind?

On Tuesday 22 September Pillsbury faced Charles Curt and Leon Blumenfeld in three games against the Rice Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.♘e5 ♘f6 6.♗c4 d5 7.exd5 ♗d6 8.0-0).
The piece sacrifice was the brainchild of the wealthy Isaac Leopold Rice, and the subject of fairly extensive analysis at the time because of the depth of his purse. Pillsbury was not a student of the opening, and Curt and Blumenfeld, who were, had the rare distinction of winning three games in a row against the American champion. Pillsbury then played five games at rook odds against W. Southwick, finishing ahead 3-2. For the afternoon, then, the master's record was 3-5.

Tuesday evening Pillsbury played Black against Harry Zirn, champion of the Brooklyn Chess Club since 1902. Born in Königsberg on 6 August 1879, the twenty-four year old

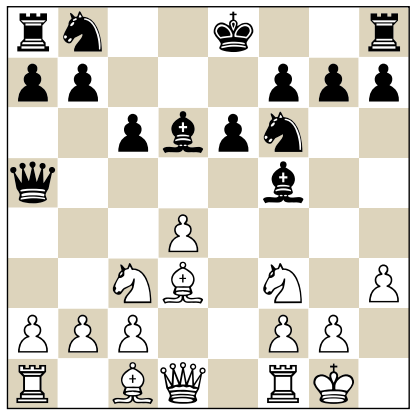
> 'Are we seeing a simple error, the rust of several months layoff from chess?'

had lived in Brooklyn since the age of seven. A New York Law School graduate, Zirn had been admitted to the bar two years before playing against Pillsbury, and for over half a century would practice law in greater metropolitan New York. His offices at 215 Montague Street were only a short walk from the chess club. Eventually his law practice would leave little time for chess, but in the years immediately around the turn of the century, Zirn was a regular in Brooklyn events. On 31 October 1902, for instance, he had been one of two to defeat Lasker in his Dutch Arms Chess Club twenty board simul, a success he repeated at the World Champion's expense at the Brooklyn Chess Club a few months later, on 19 February 1903. But simultaneous performances were not exhibition match games, as the young lawyer learned against Pillsbury, who took advantage of his opponent's weak endgame play. The game's final position was probably amusing to all present, except Zirn himself.

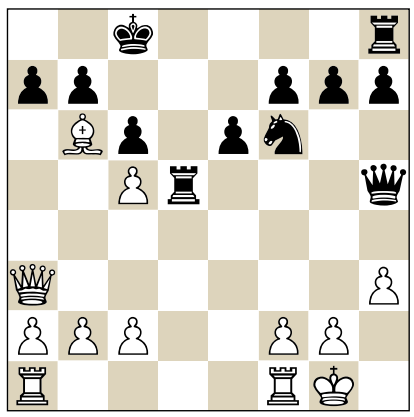
As with the game above against Howell, Pillsbury's win over Zirn has long missed being collected among his known games.

SD 11.6 – B01
Harry Zirn
Harry Pillsbury
Brooklyn Chess Club Exhibition
Game 22 September 1903

1.e4 d5 After he first played the Scandinavian in a serious tournament game in Hanover 1902, winning against James Mason, Pillsbury employed it three more times at Monte Carlo 1903, drawing against Marshall and Tarrasch, while winning a second time against Mason.
2.exd5 ♕xd5 3.♘c3 ♕a5 4.d4 ♘f6 5.♗d3 c6 6.h3 ♗f5 7.♘f3 e6 8.0-0 ♗d6



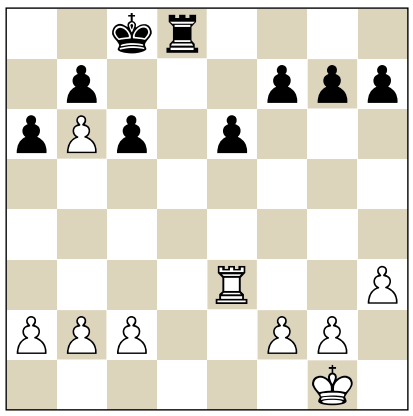
9.♕e2 At Hanover Mason tried 9.♘e2. After Pillsbury continued 9...♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘bd7 11.♗d2 ♕c7 12.c4 c5 13.♘g3 a6 14.d5 e5, Mason suffered throughout the game
9...♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘bd7 11.♘d2 ♕h5 12.♘de4 ♘xe4 13.♘xe4 ♗c7 14.♗d2 0-0-0 15.♕a3 ♘f6 16.♘c5 ♗b6 17.♗a5 ♗xc5 18.dxc5 ♖d5 19.♗b6



19...a6 20.♕g3
Better seems to be the more ambitious 20.c4!? ♖d2 (20...♖g5? allows an immediate win after 21.♕d3!)

21.♕e3 ♖d7 22.b4 with a more comfortable game for White.

20...♕e5 21.♕xe5 ♖xe5 22.♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 23.♖xe1 ♘d7 24.♖e3 ♘xb6 25.cxb6 ♖d8



26.♖g3 Now Zirn began to misplay the rook endgame, a common weakness at the time among even stronger club players. 26.♔f1 ♖d1+ 27.♔e2 ♖b1 28.♖b3 was more accurate.

26...g6 27.♖f3 ♖d1+ 28.♔h2 f5 29.♔g3 ♔d7

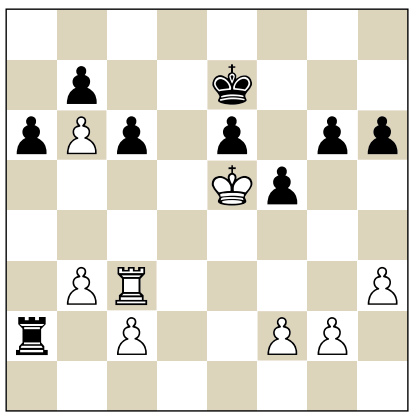
29...e5! was more to the point.

30.♔f4 h6 31.♔e5 ♔e7 32.♖d3 ♖e1+ 33.♖e3 ♖b1 34.b3

34.♖b3 was White's best way to offer some resistance.

34...♖b2! 35.♖c3? Zirn's endgame play goes from bad to worse. Best was 35.♖g3! g5 36.f4 ♖xc2 37.fxg5 ♖e2+ 38.♔f4 ♖e4+ 39.♔f3 hxg5 40.♖xg5, with chances for a draw.

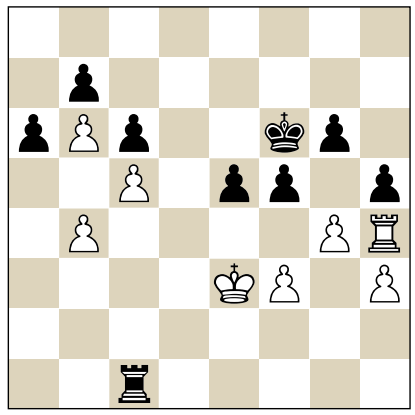
35...♖xa2



36.b4 ♖b2 37.♖c4 ♖b1 38.♖h4 ♖e1+ 38...h5 was stronger: 39.♖c4 g5 40.♔d4 h4 41.♔c3 ♖d1 etc.

39.♔d4 h5 40.♔d3 ♖d1+ 41.♔e2 ♖d5 42.c4 ♖d7 43.g3 e5 44.♔e3 ♔f6 45.f3 ♖d1 46.c5 ♖c1 47.g4?

47.♔e2 ♖h1 48.♔f2 ♖h2+ 49.♔g1 ♖c2 50.♔f1 ♖b2 51.♔g1 ♔e6 52.g4 fxg4 53.hxg4 ♖xb4 54.♖h3 hxg4 55.fxg4 ♔d5 with an easy win.



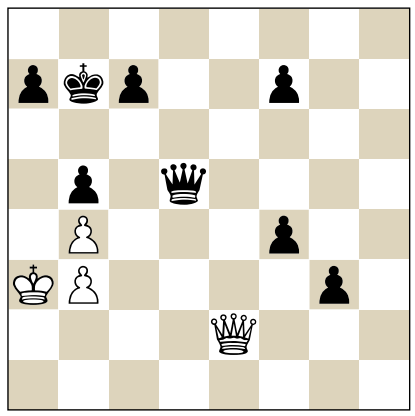
47...♔g5 A humorous finish, and a fitting conclusion to the unfortunate way Zirn conducted the rook endgame. White resigned.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle,
27 September 1903

As the next day's *New York Tribune* remarked, Pillsbury's contest with Zirn 'was not ended at a late hour in the evening.' Once more the lone performer was left to make his late night way back to Manhattan.

Wednesday, 23 September 1903 saw some relief for Pillsbury, insofar as a single game against a stronger club member was not scheduled. That morning he announced his intended participation at Cambridge Springs the following April, and urged his European counterparts to cross the ocean to play. In the afternoon, for the first time, draughts was added to his performance. He finished 7-0, with 2 draws, at chess, and 2-1, with 2 draws, at draughts. The *Eagle's* draughts columns of 27 September, 4 and 11 October 1903 would all together publish five of his efforts against Brooklyn players from his several sessions.

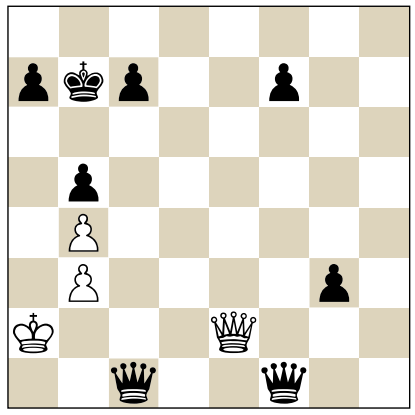
In the evening he gave a simultaneous performance, but with a twist: Pillsbury offered gambits at every board. In all, fifteen games were played on twelve boards. Against a very strong team Pillsbury finished 10-3, with 2 draws. One draw, with Charles Jaffe, was preserved as a curious fragment. For readers with more historical leanings, the position below appears as the very first diagram on page 1 of Edward Winter's *Chess Facts and Fables* (McFarland 2006). The position can now be definitively identified as taken from one of fifteen simultaneous gambit games played at the Brooklyn Chess Club on Wednesday evening, 23 September 1903. The young Jaffe allows his much more famous opponent to escape a dead lost position, although not before Pillsbury too missed a fairly simple draw. Again, as with the missed opportunity in his game with Howell, Pillsbury's performance, at least in retrospect, lends itself to speculation regarding his health.



Pillsbury-Jaffe
Brooklyn Chess Club 1903

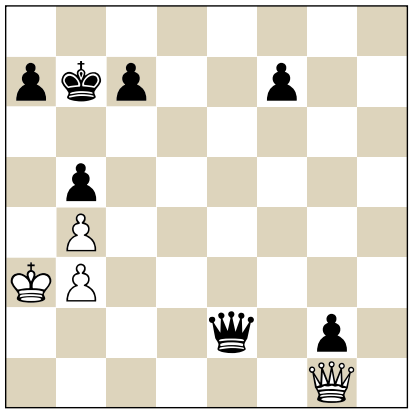
1...f3 2.♕d2! ♕c6 3.♕c2 f2 4.♕e2 ♕c1+ 5.♔a2 f1♕??

A major error that allows Pillsbury an artistic escape. Black could equally have played some cautious queen moves, or have won cleanly with 5...a6! 6.♕xf2 (6.♕xb5+ is met by 6...♔a7!) 6...♕a1+ 7.♔xa1 gxf2, etc. Now Pillsbury can secure a draw:



6.♕f3+?? And instead he played this move. How was it possible for him to miss 6.♕xb5+ ♔c8 7.♕e8+ ♔b7 8.♕b5+... After the text move, Black is still winning.

6...♕c6 7.♕xf1 g2 8.♕f2 ♕g6 9.♕g1 ♕g4 10.♔b2 ♕e2+ 11.♔a3



11...♕f1?? Again, missing a clear win. The f1-square seemed to carry a peculiar curse for Jaffe in this game. Among many other winning moves, 11...a5! is the sharpest as it destroys White's stalemate fortress. Instead, the game ended with

12.♕xg2+ ♕xg2 Draw.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle,
4 October 1903

Thursday, 24 September, saw Pillsbury give 'the regular club odds' to all the players who wanted the handicap. Our distance from the world of material odds in chess allows us to simplify its operation, to reduce it to the common offering of a pawn, or knight, for instance. But odds giving in clubs in the 19th century was often far more complex, and when a player of Pillsbury's calibre arrived, the contortions some would go through to try and 'level the playing field' were extensive indeed. Thus it came about that Thursday afternoon Pillsbury found himself resigning to a man to whom he had given the enormous odds of rook, pawn and two moves. He gave another player the same odds, while yet a third took a knight. Despite the various handicaps, Pillsbury finished his chess games 9-1, with 2 draws, while at draughts, conducted at the same time as the chess, he managed only 1-2, with 5 draws.

DAVID DELUCIA COLLECTION

'Pillsbury found himself resigning to a man to whom he had given the enormous odds of rook, pawn and two moves.'

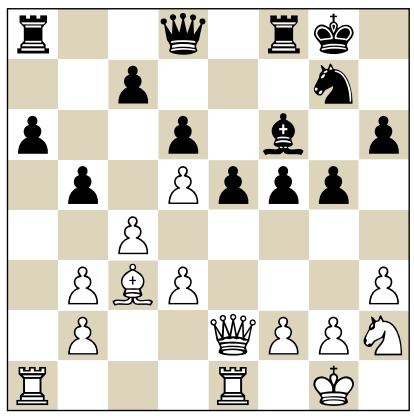
That evening he again took black while facing one of the club's strongest players, Charles Curt. Born near Leipzig on 6 July 1868, Curt had appeared at the Brooklyn Chess Club around the turn of the century, quickly establishing himself as a popular member, one well versed in music (his profession was piano playing), literature and art. Curt would win the Brooklyn Chess Club's championship in 1907, three years before a brain tumour tragically cut his life short at 42. Of little means and without relatives in the United States, Curt would be laid to rest in the family plot of another chess player, William M. de Visser, as reported by Helms, who attended the popular player's funeral. Another Brooklyn club member wrote Curt's mother and brother in Germany of his passing. Thus both Pillsbury and his opponent, young as they were, would soon be dead.

None of which could possibly be foreseen that Thursday evening in 1903 when Curt sat down across from Pillsbury. In what we suspect was a small jest at the expense of Helms, who had, as we have seen, written earlier in the week that Pillsbury did not believe 'in the efficacy of 3...a6' in the Ruy Lopez, when given the chance by Curt, Pillsbury immediately played it. While Pillsbury won handily, his final move, bypassing a short and attractive mating sequence that would have given great pleasure to the club members witnessing the contest, once more raises speculation regarding the consistency of his powers of calculation. The game was played at 20 moves an hour.

RL 19.2 – C88
Charles Curt
Harry Pillsbury
Brooklyn Chess Club Exhibition
Game 24 September 1903

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.h3 0-0 9.♘c3 ♘a5 10.d3 ♘e8 11.♘d5 ♘xb3 12.axb3 f5 13.c4 ♗b7 14.♗d2 ♗xd5 15.exd5 15.cxd5, as Helms suggested, may have indeed been a better option for White.

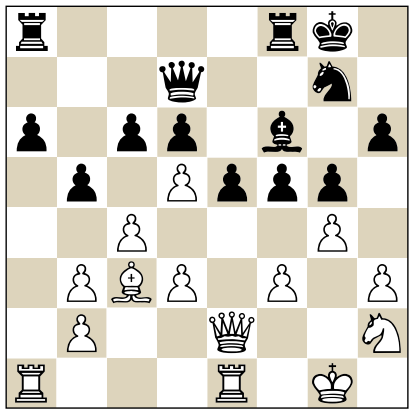
15...h6 16.♕e2 ♗f6 17.♗c3 g5 18.♘h2 ♘g7



19.g4!? Curt cannot be blamed for lacking courage here as he tried to stop Pillsbury's kingside assault in its tracks. An alternative idea was 19.♖a5 ♕e8 20.♖ea1 ♘h5 21.g3 f4, with complex play.

19...♕d7 20.f3?!
Completely compromising. After 20.♘f1 ♗d8 21.♘g3 f4 22.♘e4 Black's attack seems really dangerous after 22...f3! 23.♕e3 h5.

20...c6! Adding extra pressure on White's scattered pawns.

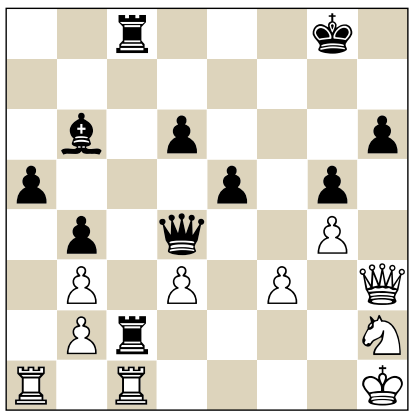


21.♖a5?? This fails. White should have tried 21.dxc6 ♕xc6 22.b4 ♗d8 23.c5 etc. Now the rout is on.

21...cxd5 22.cxd5 ♕b7 23.♖ea1 ♗d8 24.♖5a2 b4 25.♗e1 a5 26.♕c2 ♖c8 27.♕d1 ♕xd5 28.♗f2 fxg4 29.hxg4 ♘e6 30.♗e3 ♘d4 31.♗xd4 ♕xd4+ 32.♔h1 ♗b6 33.♖c1 ♖c7

A straightforward kill would have been 33...♖xc1 34.♕xc1 ♕xd3 35.♕c4+ ♕xc4 36.bxc4 e4! 37.fxe4 ♖f2.

34.♖aa1 ♖fc8 35.♕f1 ♖c2! 36.♕h3



36...♔g7 Why Pillsbury ignored 36...♖xc1+ remains unknown. Time trouble? An expectation his opponent would shortly resign? A simple lapse? White resigned.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle,
27 September 1903

Friday brought with it another day of simultaneous chess and checkers play, in which Pillsbury played nine chess games in the afternoon, finishing 7-1, with 1 draw. His loss had come in a game where he had offered the odds of pawn, move, and draw. In draughts his score was 1-1 with 4 draws. That evening his totals were 4-2 in chess, while four draughts players, the most in number he faced during the week, were handled with a final score among them of 1-0, with 8 draws.

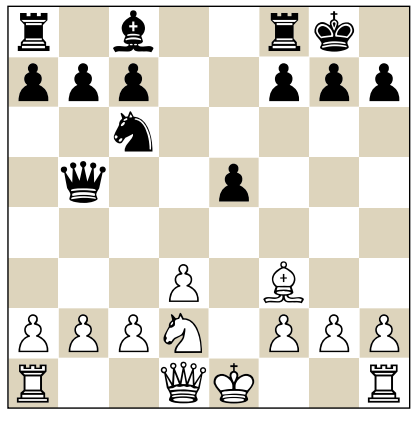
Saturday Pillsbury's usual schedule of exhibition match game followed by simultaneous play was reversed, undoubtedly to feature on Saturday night his popular blindfold exhibition. In the afternoon he played against twenty-two-year-old Albert Whiting Fox, recently moved to Brooklyn from Washington, D.C., and without question the strongest player Pillsbury faced that week. Fox had been the subject of some chess press in recent years for a series of games played during his teenage years abroad. In later years he would work as a correspondent for newspapers in New York and Washington, and eventually obtain a law degree to support his family.

That afternoon in Brooklyn, Pillsbury may well have underestimated Fox's growing strength, as perhaps did Janowski, Chigorin, Schlechter and Teichmann at Cambridge Springs a few months later, as all four of the masters dropped their tournament games to the young man. In any case, Pillsbury's choices between moves 18 and 22 (curiously enough, all rook moves) strongly suggest he was either very tired or not paying close attention to the game's flow, or perhaps both. Play, according to the Canadian magazine *Checkmate*, took place at a rate of 24 moves an hour. The game saw wider coverage than any other from Pillsbury's Brooklyn week. Napier, then one of America's strongest masters, spoke glowingly of Fox, adding after this win that Fox had 'produced games that suffer nothing in comparison with the games of Morphy.' And yet despite invoking the demigod of American chess in complimenting Fox's play, in this encounter Napier criticized him for his timid fourth move.

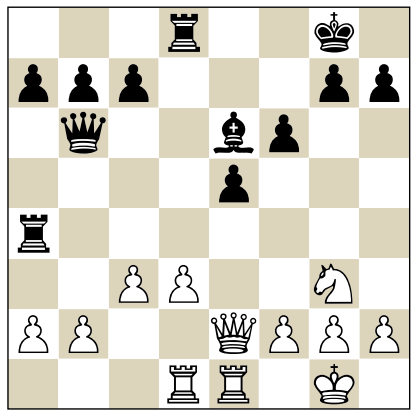
RG 7.2 – C42
Albert W. Fox
Harry Pillsbury
Brooklyn Chess Club 1903

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 The Petroff was a long-time favourite of Pillsbury's. He used this opening in many top tournaments starting in 1895.

3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.d3 ♘c6 5.♗e2 d5 6.exd5 ♘xd5 7.♗d2 0-0 8.♘xd5 ♗xd2+ 9.♘xd2 ♕xd5 10.♗f3 ♕b5



11.♗xc6 ♕xc6 12.0-0 ♗e6 13.♖e1 f6 14.♘f1 ♖ad8 15.♕e2 ♖d4 16.♘g3 ♖fd8 17.♖ad1 ♕b6 18.c3 ♖a4?! *Checkmate*: 'This is probably not the kind of play Pillsbury would indulge in against Lasker.'



19.d4! Fox grabs the first opportunity to do something active.

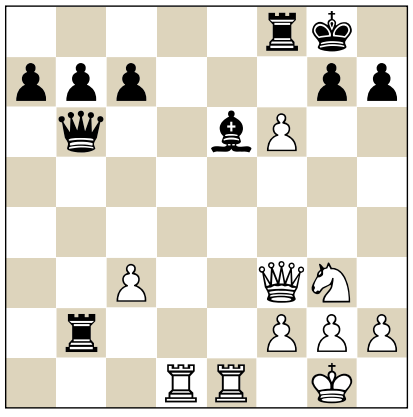
19...♖xa2?!

A very risky approach. Safer was 19...♖e8 20.b3 ♖a5 21.dxe5 ♖xe5 22.♕f3 ♖xe1+ 23.♖xe1 c6 with equal play.

20.dxe5 ♖e8?! A defence worth exploring was 20...♖xd1!? 21.♖xd1 h6 22.♖d8+ ♔h7 23.exf6 ♖a1+ 24.♘f1 and here either 24...♕a6 or 24...gxf6 would have forced White to prove his position can actually be won.

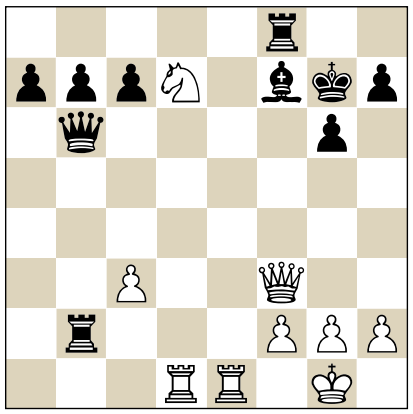
21.exf6 ♖xb2?! One way to throw obstacles in Fox's way would have been 21...♗f7 22.♕g4 ♕xf6 23.♖xe8+ ♗xe8 24.♕e4 ♔f8 25.♕xb7 ♕b6 26.♕f3+ ♕f6.

22.♕f3 ♖f8? In a clearly uncomfortable position, Pillsbury continues a series of weak moves that eventually lead to his defeat. 22...♕c6!? 23.♕f4 ♖b5 24.fxg7 ♗f7 was a possible defence.



23.♘h5! White has a completely winning position here.

23...g6 24.f7+! ♗xf7 25.♘f6+ ♔g7 26.♘d7



26...♕c6 27.♘xf8?

Here White falters, although he is still winning. Much more convincing is 27.♕e3! and if, for instance, 27...♖e8, then 28.♕d4+ ♔h6 29.♖xe8 and after Black retakes with the bishop, the queen check at f4 dooms Black's exposed king.

27...♔xf8 28.♕f4 ♔g7 29.♖e7 ♕d5 30.♕c1! ♕b5 31.c4 ♕b4 32.♖xc7 ♖e2 33.♕a1+ ♕b2 34.♕xb2+ ♖xb2 35.g4 ♔f6 36.g5+

Black resigned.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 4 October 1903;
Pittsburg Dispatch, 5 October 1903
Checkmate, December 1903, page 54

'One doubts the versatile Kneeland wore his uniform and medals during Pillsbury's exhibition.'

Saturday night, 26 September 1903, saw the culmination of Pillsbury's arduous week of working for the enjoyment of others. Pillsbury played sixteen opponents without sight of the board. His opponents included a mixed crew of experience, youth and local celebrity. One of his exhibition game partners, Charles Curt, took a board. So did a very young player, only nine years old, with the curious name of Lazarus David Rosowski. The youngster had been taught chess at the age of six – quite early for the times – and would go on to play chess in high school as well as at City College of New York, where he was chess club president. Great things were expected of the little boy, but no surprises occurred that night, and he went down to defeat.

Another curious competitor was recorded by Helms as 'S.F. Kneeland'. Stillman Foster Kneeland, born 17 May 1845 at South Stukely, Quebec, came south to join the Union Army during America's Civil War. Discharged after being severely wounded at Petersburg, he served many years in the National Guards of Vermont and New York, studied law, and moved to New York City in 1872, where he developed a successful commercial law practice, wrote legal textbooks, painted, published volumes of poetry (much of it dreadful), researched as a genealogist, and was appointed by New York's governor in 1897 as Judge-Advocate General on his staff, with the rank of Brigadier-General. One doubts the versatile Kneeland wore his uniform and medals during Pillsbury's exhibition, as his photo included here depicts, but he did manage a draw with the champion. It is always possible that Pillsbury knew his distinguished local visitor's board number, and that a draw was the socially 'correct' outcome for the game. Many performers would have arranged matters so, in hopes of ensuring a return invitation. No one knows if Pillsbury engaged in such amiable 'draws'. He likely didn't feel pressure to in Brooklyn, one of his oldest home clubs. What we do know is that night Pillsbury finished his blindfold exhibition 8-1, with 7 draws.

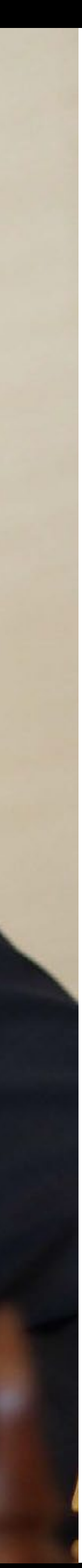
At the end of his week-long engagement in Brooklyn Pillsbury's results were as follows. In all, he finished 2-1 with 1 draw in serious exhibition match game play, and his other overall play at 54-15 with 15 draws. The record is not outstanding, but when one takes into account the number of games he had to play taking on the Rice Gambit, odds of a rook or more, announced offers of gambits, and blindfold games performed, along with the draughts play as well (5-4 with 19 draws) it represents a more than respectable summary of the entertainment he brought his Brooklyn hosts.

A few days later Pillsbury took the train home to Philadelphia to continue his tour, eventually making his way to the west coast by early April 1904 – a gruelling schedule even for a fully healthy man. After a few days back in Philadelphia, he travelled to Cambridge Springs, 570 km away, where on 25 April 1904, he had his revenge on Albert Fox in the first round of the last tournament of his life. ■

Nikita Vitiugov won the first playoff game that was worth an extra £8,000. 'Of course I never agree on a draw in this position.'

Nikita Vitiugov is victorious in his Gibraltar Masters debut climbing to the top amid tough competition. Zhao Xue, only a point behind, claims the top woman's prize. **Macauley Peterson** reports from the Iberian coast.

The 'Iceman' Cometh



MACAULEY PETERSON

In a taxi heading to the airport at the end of the 11th Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival, the radio is tuned to a local news program. The anchor announces that an after-school playgroup for children would be held at its regularly scheduled time, at its regularly scheduled location on Main Street. Not exactly an earth-shattering scoop.

The next item is more newsworthy, however: 'Grandmaster Nikita Vitiugov of Russia, has won the Gibraltar Masters Open', the host reports. As we arrive at the terminal, an interview with the winner plays and it seems fortunate that GM Nigel Short, who was bound for the same flight to London as we are, had left the Caleta Hotel one taxi ahead of us, and was therefore spared another reminder of his disappointment the evening before, when he lost a two-game rapid playoff and with it, his Gibraltar title.

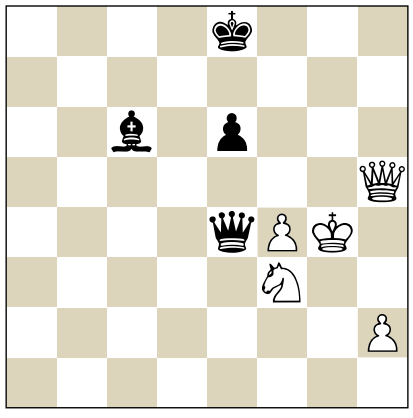
The 11th edition of the tournament witnessed a dramatic conclusion, when in fact *four* players tied for first place. The small live commentary room, where GM Simon Williams and IM Irina Krush commented the games, was packed to the gills, with thousands more watching the spectacle webcast live on *GibraltarChessCongress.com*.

GMs Sandipan Chanda, Nigel Short, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and Nikita Vitiugov each finished the ten-round tournament with eight points, to advance to the playoff games, which were played at a rate of ten minutes with a five second increment. In the semi-final, Short knocked off Vachier-Lagrave, and Vitiugov bested Chanda.

Short is no stranger to Gibraltar playoffs. He returned to the Caleta as the defending champion, having beaten Hou Yifan in their two-game tiebreak match last year. This time around, however, his opponent was the formidable young Russian Vitiugov, who had led the tournament from the beginning, and is known as an excellent rapid player.

> 'The first game of the playoff was critical to the result, and just a tad controversial.'

The first game of the playoff was critical to the result, and just a tad controversial. Vitiugov, with the white pieces, was up a pawn in a queen and knight versus queen and bishop ending, but with no clear plan to make progress and virtually no time on the clock. He repeatedly checked Short to gain time, and even caused a three-fold repetition, before varying in a brave attempt to win.



Vitiugov-Short, Playoff Game 1
position after 73.♕h5+

After **73...♔e7** Nigel offered a draw, noticing a repetition of the position from moves 69 and 71. But Vitiugov sat stone-faced and ignored it, before continuing to play. This obviously annoyed Short, who was unsure about whether he should have stopped the clock and summoned the arbiter, but ultimately did neither and missed his chance.

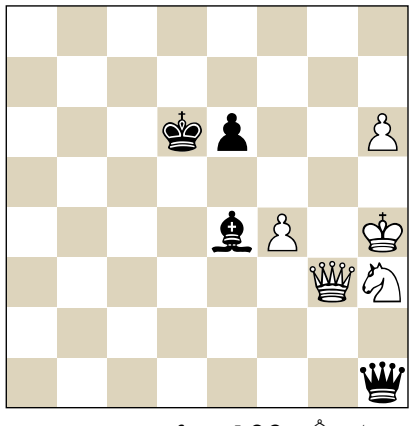
'Seven seconds and he's playing for a win. That's crazy!' Williams erupted. 'This guy's the Iceman – that's his new name', a reference to Val Kilmer's character in the 1980s American action film *Top Gun*.

Many of the spectators were incredulous that Vitiugov could possibly win, playing as he was, solely on the five-second increment and using frequent checks to keep his time up and his hopes alive.

Eventually Vitiugov found a way to advance his h-pawn, and gradually increased the pressure, until Short was on the brink of losing.

Williams, who had been unabashedly rooting for his countryman for most of the game, now had to marvel at Vitiugov's perseverance. 'I have to say, if White wins this game, this is unbelievable technique – actually *amazing*. I think this is something special.'

A final tactical blow capped the 104-move win.



position after 102...♗e4

103.f5+! ♔c6 104.♕c3+
Black resigned, in view of the marching h-pawn.

When we spoke the next day in the Gibraltar airport departures lounge, Short had gotten over the loss for the most part, but questioned the need to make a repetition claim in such situations.

'In this case, you've got it on video, electronically recorded, with the arbiter writing down the moves. Why the hell is it incumbent upon *me* – especially when it's clear I want a draw – to stop the flow of the game', he asks. 'The arbiter is standing there, and what is he doing? It's like the ball has gone in the back of the net and he's not blowing the whistle saying "goal".'

Surely, he argues, it would be better if the rules allowed a three-fold repetition to *automatically* end the game, which ought to be technically trivial to implement.

'I said "draw" and he just gave me a sort of Soviet blank stare. I mean he knew damn well he'd repeated the position.'

Short thinks the current rules as they relate to rapid or blitz chess are 'archaic', and points out that in a classical game the player has a score-sheet to validate his claim, which is not the case in blitz. He even suggests that Vitiugov's decision to prolong the game, though perfectly legal under the rules, was nevertheless unethical.

Vitiugov sees it differently. 'Of course I never agree on a draw in this position. He had two ways to make a draw: To ask the arbiter, and just to

make it – to exchange something. He just played. So why should I agree?'

After this loss, Short was in a must-win situation in the second game, but Vitiugov played very solidly and was never in danger. Once they reached a bishops of opposite colours ending, the commentators joked that even Magnus Carlsen couldn't win Nigel's position.

Winning Gibraltar is Vitiugov's best individual result to date, exceeding his shared first in 2011 at the Aeroflot Open, where he was awarded second place behind Le Quang Liem on tiebreak points, rather than a playoff. Vitiugov prefers the latter.

'To win this tournament in tiebreak games, of course the victory became more important for me. I know that I was first by performance rating – if they use usual tiebreaks, actually I would have won – but tiebreaks I think is very honest and very good, but a little bit tough, and very hard after ten rounds.'

In Gibraltar, the first place prize money is not shared in the case of a playoff, and Vitiugov's win was worth an additional £8,000 (over $12,000).

'For me it isn't good motivation to think about how much money I will win. For some players it helps them to play stronger, but for me it can only make some pressure on me, so I try to not think about it.'

Fortunately for him, just reaching the playoff took a great deal of financial pressure off, according to Vitiugov. 'When I played the last round game against Maxime (Vachier-Lagrave), in the end I had a losing position, and if I lose this game I would have won almost nothing – maybe £2,000 – and it's an extremely big difference between this prize than even the second prize.'

Vitiugov's round-ten draw with Vachier-Lagrave was a thrilling finale, which the tournament winner calls 'one of the most amazing games I have ever played.' The Frenchman went for an obscure variation in the King's Indian, 3...e6, first tried in 1934, and rarely repeated.

NOTES BY
Nikita Vitiugov

KI 81.2 – E60
Nikita Vitiugov
Maxime Vachier-Lagrave
Gibraltar 2013 (10)

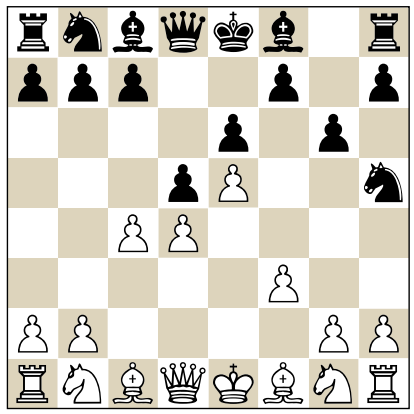
The situation before this last-round game was clear: the winner would most likely win the tournament. In case of a draw a tiebreak would be played. So we both played ambitiously.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 e6!?

An extremely unpleasant surprise for White: to be caught in home preparation on the third move is never welcome. There isn't a universal piece of advice for such situations. This time I played aggressively, but I am not sure if that was a wise decision.

4.e4 d5 5.e5 The most logical. After 5.♘c3 dxe4 6.fxe4 e5 7.d5 ♗c5 the position looks similar to a Nimzo with 4.f3.

5...♘h5



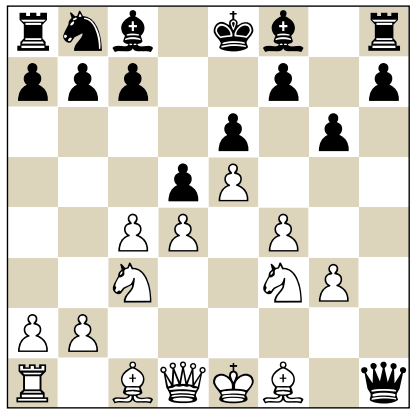
6.f4?! It's very difficult to evaluate this move. Objectively speaking, it's almost losing, but as a practical decision it was pretty good. Also, as far as I understand, Houdini doesn't recommend it, so we were out of book.

More ordinary continuations are 6.♗e3 c5 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.♘ge2 ♘g7, with good counterplay for Black, and 6.♘h3 c5 7.g4 ♘g7 8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.♗g5 ♕a5 10.♗d2 ♕d8 11.♗g5, after which we would most likely see a repetition of moves.

6...♕h4+ Also playable was 6...c5 7.♘f3 cxd4 8.♕xd4 ♘c6 9.♕f2, but who can resist winning an exchange?

7.g3 ♘xg3 8.♘f3 ♕h5 9.hxg3 ♕xh1 10.♘c3

I guess that in the 19th century this position would have been evaluated as totally winning for White, whereas in the 20th century the assessment is: very strong compensation for White. But now everybody knows that if you are an exchange up and your queen isn't trapped, don't be afraid of ghosts.

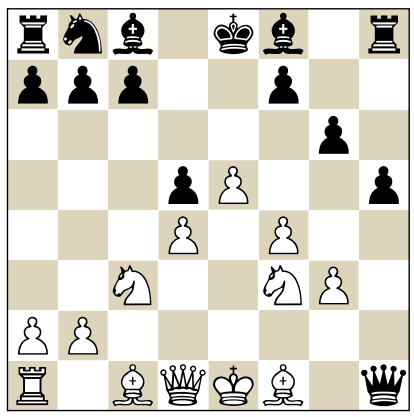


10...h5?

A very human and natural move, but to play natural moves you must have a natural position.

Houdini likes the artificial 10...dxc4! 11.♕e2 ♗d7 12.♔f2 ♗c6 13.♗g2 ♕h5 14.♕xc4 ♘d7 15.♗e3, and the white position looks very attractive, but it's an illusion: 15...♗e7 16.♖h1 ♕f5 17.♕e2 ♘b6 18.d5 ♘xd5 19.♘d4 ♘xc3 20.bxc3 ♗xg2 21.♘xf5 ♗xh1 22.♘xe7 ♔xe7, and Black is better.

11.♗e3? Too slow. Objectively speaking, White doesn't have enough compensation (further down we'll see why), so I should have played more concretely: 11.cxd5 exd5 (11...h4? is bad because of 12.g4 h3 13.♔f2 ♘d7 14.♘e4, and the black queen will be caught)



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

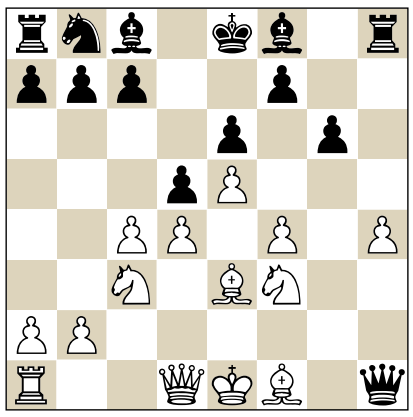
JOHN SAUNDERS

Nikita Vitiugov and Nigel Short in the tense first game of the playoff.

12.♔f2! (the key idea; the black queen is in danger!) 12...♘c6 (12...h4 runs into 13.g4 c6 14.♘xd5!) 13.♘xd5 ♗g4 14.♘f6+ ♔d8 15.♗e3 ♗xf3 (15...♗e7 16.♗c4) 16.♕xf3 ♕xf3+ 17.♔xf3 ♗e7 18.♗c4 ♗xf6 19.exf6 ♖f8 20.♖c1, and the computer says it's equal.

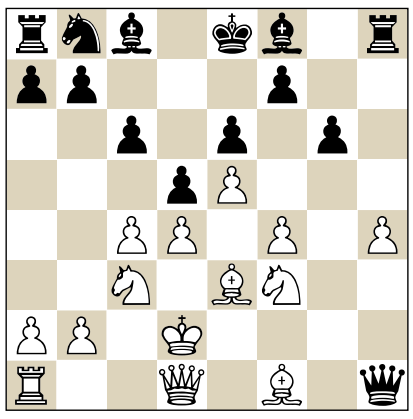
11...h4 12.gxh4

A bad idea is 12.g4? h3 13.♔f2 h2 14.♘e2? because of 14...♕xf3+ and wins.



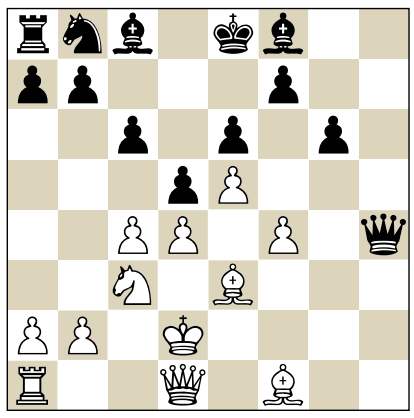
12...c6 Why not the simple 12...♗e7 13.♕e2 ♗xh4+ 14.♔d2 ♗d8, and Black is rock-solid? It's not an easy win, but there is no doubt who is better here.

13.♔d2 Human play has its own rules. Objectively, 13.♕e2 was stronger: 13...♖xh4 14.♘xh4 ♕xh4+ 15.♔d2 ♗d7, but here Black's play is too easy.



13...♖xh4? Black is looking for clarity. Even here 13...♗e7 was stronger, for instance 14.♖c1 ♗xh4 15.cxd5 exd5 16.♘xd5 ♗d8, and White has some compensation, but with the king on d2 it can't be enough.

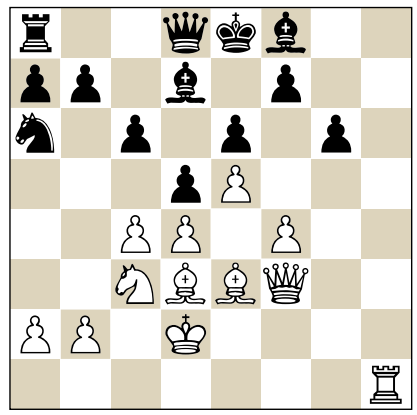
14.♘xh4 ♕xh4



15.♕f3

The first part of the game is over. Black is a pawn up, but of course White has very good compensation. Maybe he has even more than just compensation.

15...♗d7 16.♗d3 ♘a6 17.♖h1 ♕d8 On 17...♕e7 White plays 18.c5!.

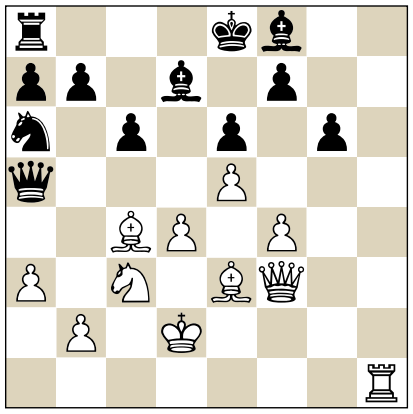


18.a3! I like this move. It's very useful, as it controls the b4-square, probably the most 'active' square in the position for Black.

After 18.c5 Black continues 18...♕a5.

18...dxc4 19.♗xc4 ♕a5?

19...♕b6 20.♔c1 0-0-0 was more precise, but here, too, White has the initiative: 21.♖h7 c5 22.d5 exd5 23.♘xd5 ♕c6 24.♖xf7.



20.♖h7?! This isn't a mistake, but White had a stronger move: 20.f5! exf5 (White wins both after 20...0-0-0 21.fxg6 fxg6 22.♗g5 ♖e8 23.♕f7 and after 20...gxf5? 21.♗g5! ♕b6 22.♔d3 ♕xb2 23.♖h7 ♕xa3 24.♕h5 ♘b4+ 25.♔e2 ♕b2+ 26.♔f1) 21.♖h7 0-0-0 22.♖xf7 ♘c7 23.♔c2 ♖e8 24.♕g3, with a clear white advantage.

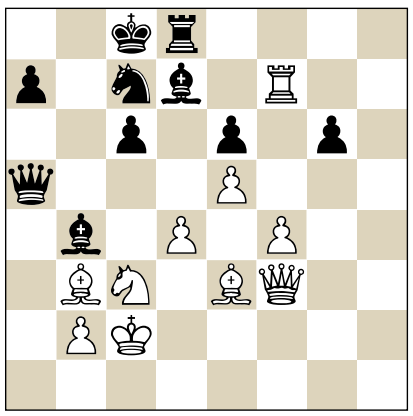
20...0-0-0

20...b5? hits on the same 21.f5!. I only saw this idea here.

21.♖xf7 ♘c7 22.♔c2

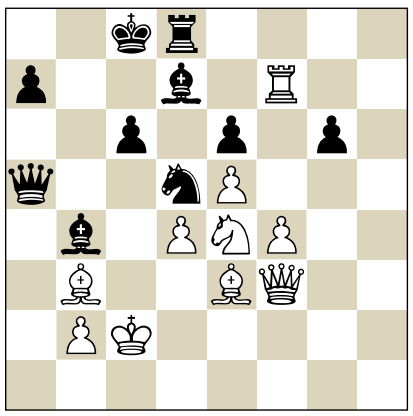
Now 22.f5 doesn't work because of 22...gxf5!.

22...b5 23.♗b3 b4 24.axb4 ♗xb4



The position looks worse for Black than it is. I hadn't realized that and played as if I was going to win in a few moves.

25.♘e4 ♘d5

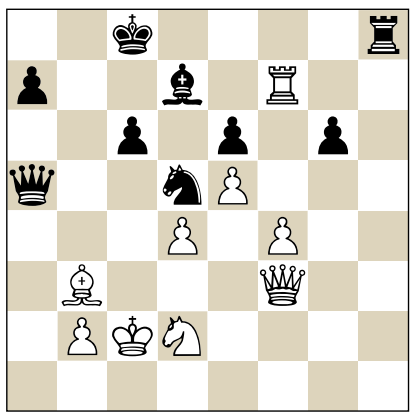


26.♗d2?

An absolutely idiotic decision, which should have cost White the game. Clearly better was 26.♖h7!? or 26.♔b1 ♖h8 27.♗c1 ♗e8 28.♖g7 ♗f8 29.♘d6+ ♗xd6 30.exd6 ♗d7 31.♖xg6, and White is better.

26...♗xd2 27.♘xd2 ♖h8!

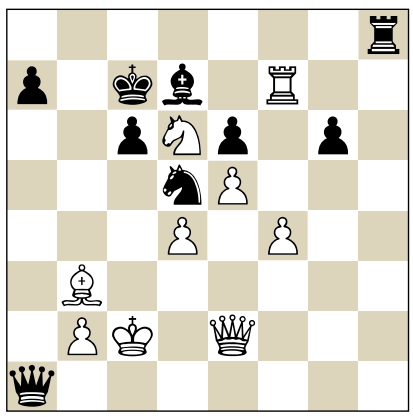
I had overlooked this possibility. The situation has changed 180 degrees: now White has to make some strong moves to equalize.



28.♘f1?

White is groggy. When you're running out of time, threats look more dangerous. As a result, I commit a second mistake, which should have been the last.

In a practical game White should have had good chances to survive after 28.♘c4!, for example: 28...♕a1 (28...♕e1 29.♘d6+ ♔d8 30.♗xd5 exd5 31.♕g2 ♖h1 32.♖xd7+ ♔xd7 33.♕g4+ ♔e7 34.♕g5+ ♔d7, with a perpetual) 29.♘d6+, and I can't imagine that Maxime would have found the only way to a win here: 29...♔c7 30.♕e2



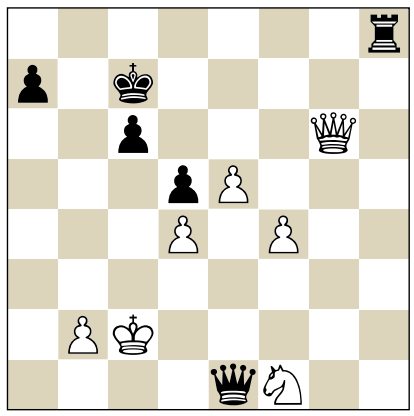
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

30...a6!! and Black wins (30...♖h1 31.♗xd5 exd5 32.♖xd7+ ♔xd7 33.♕g4+ is a perpetual).

28...♕e1

28...♕a1 would have been killing immediately: 29.♗xd5 exd5 30.♖xd7 ♔xd7 31.♕g4+ ♔c7 32.♕xg6 ♕a4+, and game over.

29.♗xd5 exd5 30.♖xd7 ♔xd7 31.♕g4+ ♔c7 32.♕xg6

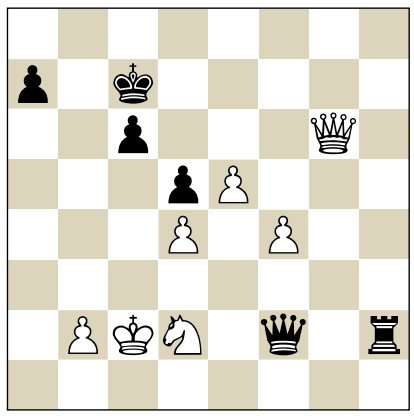


32...♕f2+??

Sometimes miracles do happen. Why not 32...♔b6 33.♘d2 ♖h1, and it's all over?

33.♘d2 ♖h2

Even here 33...♔b6 still won, but Black would have had to find a series of only moves that would not be easy to find in the heat of the game: 34.♕f6 ♖h7 35.e6 ♔b7! 36.f5 a5!! (36...a6 37.b4! draws) 37.♕g5 ♖h2, and White is lost.



34.♕d6+

The only explanation for what happened is that Maxime had overlooked this check.

34...♔b7 35.♕b4+ ♔c8 36.♕f8+

Draw.

■ ■ ■

Forty-eight grandmasters participated in the Gibraltar Masters, including eight over 2700. Vitiugov was the ninth seed at 2694, but he notched a 2821 performance rating.

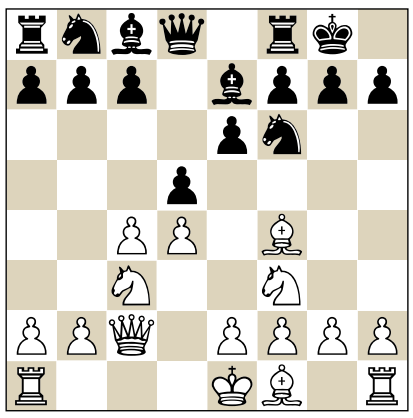
Short dropped a point early to Spanish IM Ismael Teran Alvarez, and so found himself playing catch up. 'I'm very slow in general at starting tournaments these days. I often struggle a bit at the beginning,' he noted, adding with a characteristically wry grin, 'but often I get away with it.'

To return to the top of the leader board, Short proceeded to go on a six-game winning streak, capped off by his victory over Le Quang Liem.

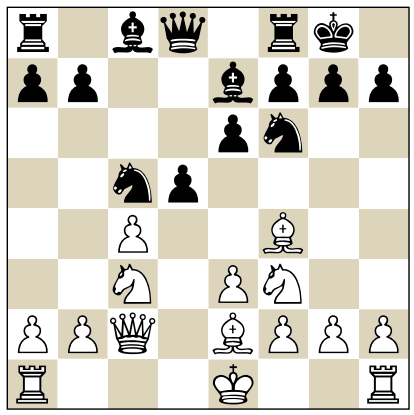
NOTES BY
Nigel Short

QO 1.2 – D37
Le Quang Liem
Nigel Short
Gibraltar 2013 (8)

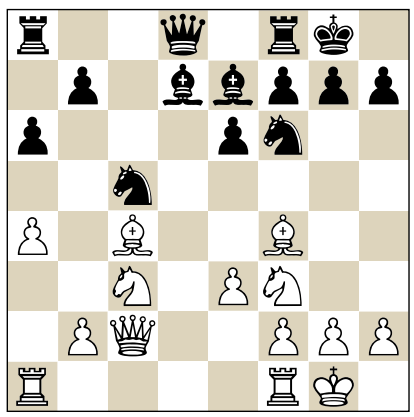
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5
Uncharacteristically, I had (successfully) ventured the Benko Gambit, earlier in the event, after a break of a quarter of a century, but while one may sometimes take liberties against weaker opponents, it is inadvisable to do so against as accomplished a player as Liem.
4.♘c3 ♗e7 5.♗f4 0-0 6.♕c2



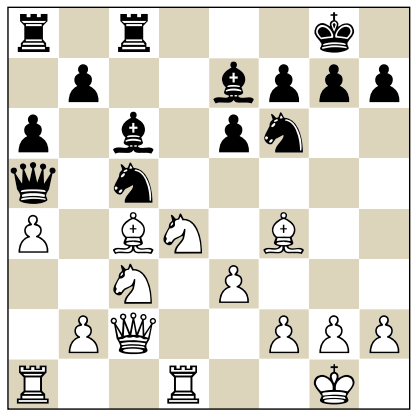
Following in the footsteps of Showalter-Lipschütz, New York 1895 – not that I knew it. In fact I sometimes get confused with these subtle deviations in move-order – even in openings in which I have vast experience. Thankfully the Queen's Gambit is not the most complicated of defences and it is usually possible to work out a reasonable plan from first principles.
6...c5 7.dxc5 ♘a6
While the white bishop is on f4 and not g5, where it bears indirect pressure against the d5-pawn, this seems a satisfactory means of development.
8.e3 ♘xc5 9.♗e2



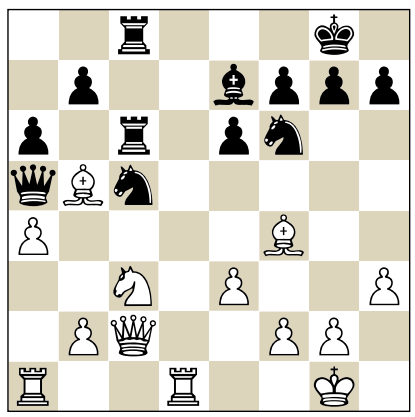
9...dxc4 Now this is OK, after White has conceded a tempo.
10.♗xc4 a6 11.a4
I was rather surprised afterwards to discover this position had been played a number of times – and by some big names too. Black's only real problem is the c8-bishop.
11...♗d7
Both Kramnik and Karpov preferred 11...b6, and while this does place the bishop on a good diagonal out of harm's way, it also leaves Her Majesty the Queen a bit short of squares.
12.0-0



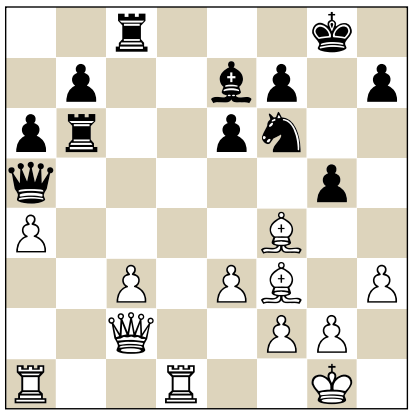
12...♗c6
I spent some time considering the liquidating 12...♘xa4 13.♘xa4 b5, but I wasn't entirely happy after 14.♘e5 bxc4 15.♖fd1.
The most logical alternative, however, is 12...♕a5, as essayed by the great Boris Spassky. I was a bit concerned that I might stumble into tactical trouble after a continuation like 13.♖fb1 ♕b4 14.♘e5, when I feared Black must be constantly wary of ♘a2 ideas, but the cold-blooded computer is rather unimpressed with White's set-up.
13.♖fd1 ♕a5 14.♘d4 ♖fc8



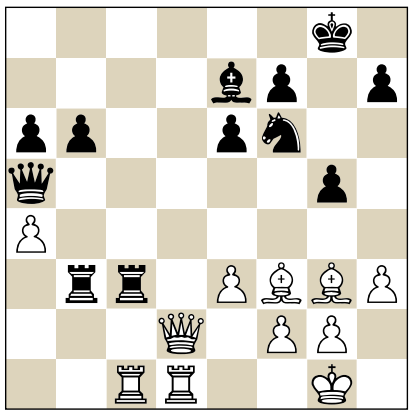
15.♘xc6 ♖xc6
Having rid myself of this turbulent priest, I felt reasonably comfortable – White's queenside weaknesses compensating for the ecclesiastical deficiency. My main concern was that I had spent rather too much time – a recurrent problem for me in Gibraltar.
16.h3 ♖ac8 17.♗b5
I was more or less sure he was going to play this. On the few occasions I have played Liem at blitz, I have almost invariably fallen for some tactical blows, but here everything was anticipated.



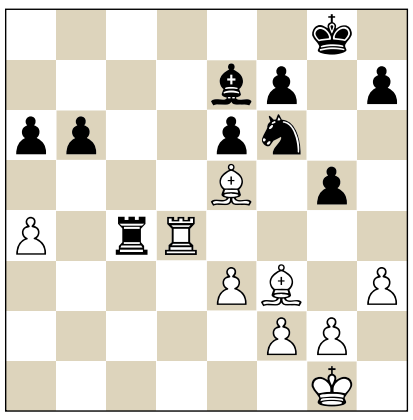
17...♖b6 18.♗e2 ♘ce4 19.♗f3 ♘xc3 20.bxc3 g5!
Creating luft with tempo.



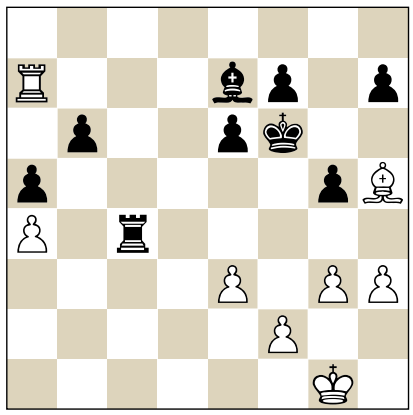
21.♗g3 ♖xc3 22.♕d2
Despite winning a pawn, the position remains unclear, as White's raking bishops provide sufficient counterplay. That said, I didn't feel I was in any great danger here.
22...♖bb3 23.♖ac1
The dark-squared bishop really ought to come to e5, which is why there is a strong argument for 23.♕d4!? here.
23...b6



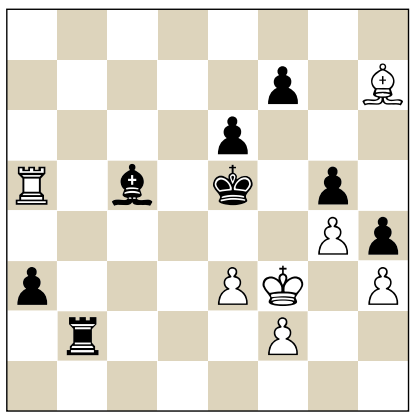
24.♖xc3?!
24.♗c7!? looked better.
24...♕xc3 25.♕xc3 ♖xc3 26.♗e5
Arriving at the desired destination at last, but the previous simplification has considerably eased Black's task.
26...♖c4 27.♖d4 And here 27.♗d4!? looks like a viable alternative.



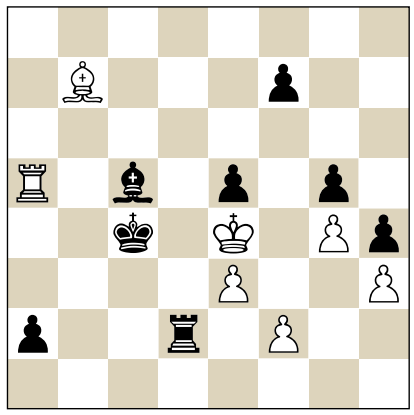
27...♖c5! 28.♗xf6 ♗xf6
Now it is clear there can only be two possible results.
29.♖d7 ♔f8
OK, but 29...♖c1+ 30.♔h2 ♖f1! was more accurate.
30.♖a7 a5 31.♗h5 ♗e7 32.♖a8+ ♔g7 33.♖a7 ♔f6 34.g3?!
For reasons that will become clear, the very awkward-looking 34.♔h2! ♖c2 35.♔g3 may well have been necessary.
34...♖c4



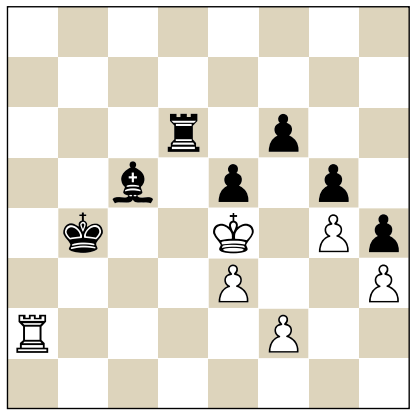
35.♖b7?
Making it easy. After 35.♗d1 I would have been forced to find some excellent moves. 35...b5!! 36.axb5 (36.♖xa5 ♖c1) 36...♖c1 37.♖d7 a4 38.♔g2 (38.b6 a3 39.b7 ♖b1) 38...a3 39.♗b3 ♖c3 40.♗a2 ♖c2 41.♗b3 ♖b2 42.♗c4 ♗c5!, and the multiple threats of ...♗xe3 and ...a2 leave White helpless.
35...♖xa4 36.♖xb6 ♖c4
Now the a-pawn is running like a legless man on bail.
37.♖a6 a4 38.♔g2 a3 39.♗e2 ♖c3 40.♗f3 ♗c5 41.♗e4 h5 42.♔f3 ♔e5 43.♗h7 ♖b3 44.g4 h4
On general principles Black avoids exchanging pawns.
45.♖a4 ♖b2 46.♖a5



46...♔d6?! Immediately after I played this move I understood that 46...♔d5! was the right one. Luckily there is little harm done.
47.♗d3 ♔d5
Covering the important c4-square and threatening to enter via that route, if White allows.
48.♗f1 a2 49.♗d3 ♖d2 50.♗a6 e5
A forcing continuation. 51...e4+ is the idea.
51.♗b7+ ♔c4 52.♔e4



52...♔b3!
Not 52...♗b4?? 53.♖xa2!.
53.♗d5+ ♖xd5 54.♖xa2 ♖d6
54...♔xa2 55.♔xd5 would unnecessarily complicate matters.
55.♖a5 ♔b4 56.♖a2 f6



White can now resign with a clear conscience. My remaining moves were not the most precise, but they were amply sufficient.
57.♔f5 ♔c4 58.♖c2+ ♔b5 59.♖b2+ ♔c6 60.♖c2 ♔b6 61.♔e4 ♔b5 62.♔f5 ♗b4 63.♔g6 ♗e1 64.♔f5 ♔b4 65.♖e2 ♗d2 66.f3 ♔c3 67.♔e4 ♖d3
White resigned.

■ ■ ■

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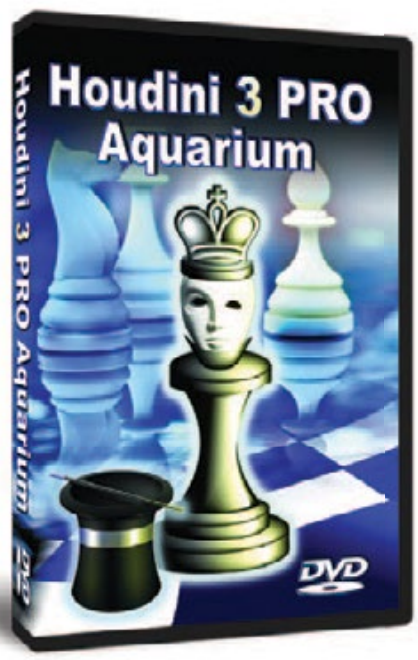

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The Gibraltar Masters is not only one of the strongest open tournaments of the year, it also attracts the most adroit female players in the world by offering substantial prizes for the best performing women.

Last year's female (and junior) winner was Hou Yifan, who stunned the world by taking the top spot ahead of world number one Judit Polgar, who also lost their individual encounter. (See 'Hou's on first, but Short "carries the bat"', New In Chess 2012/2.)

This time, with Hou absent, another top Chinese lady emerged victorious. GM Zhao Xue made her second trip to Gibraltar, having played once before in 2008, when she scored a disappointing six out of ten.

Zhao was quite critical of her play this year as well, noting that she gave up three draws to much lower rated players in the first half of the tournament. In the second half, however, her key wins with black against GMs Joe Gallagher and Eduardo Iturrizaga vaulted her into first place and gave her a spot on Board 3 facing Vassily Ivanchuk in the final round.

NOTES BY
Zhao Xue

QG 12.6 – D27
Zhao Xue
Vassily Ivanchuk
Gibraltar 2013 (10)

My mood before the game was fairly optimistic. I was half a point behind the overall leaders, but half a point ahead of Pia Cramling and the other women. So, my strategy was simple: a draw would be a victory!

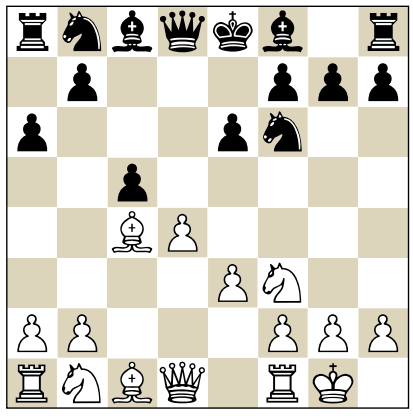
1.d4 d5 From Vassily you can expect any opening, of course.

2.c4 dxc4

He goes for the Queen's Gambit Accepted. In Gibraltar, Vassily also played the Slav and the Grünfeld, and from other occasions we know that you can also expect the King's Indian.

3.e3 In recent years I have mostly played 3.e4 here, but that leads to complex situations, and now I needed just half a point, so I decided to keep things simple.

3...e6 4.♗xc4 c5 5.♘f3 ♘f6 6.0-0 a6



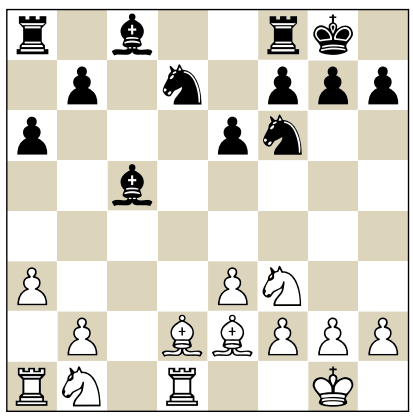
7.dxc5

This move sets the trend for the rest of the game. In different circumstances I would probably have gone for 7.a4 or 7.♕e2, but after thinking for a couple of minutes I decided to swap the queens.

7...♕xd1 8.♖xd1 ♗xc5 9.a3

The position is very balanced, without any complications. As I had spent more time on the clock, I hoped that the situation would remain stable. Still, objectively speaking, 9.♗e2 was a better move for White.

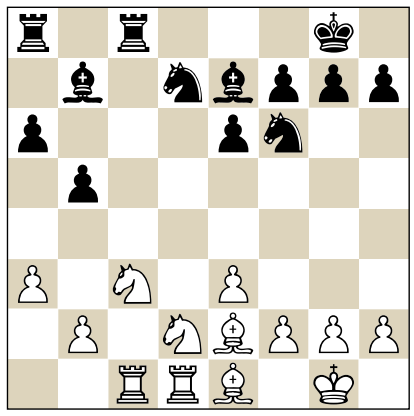
9...♘bd7 10.♗e2 0-0 11.♗d2



After the game I found that this was a new move. I don't want to fix the position, but slowly take countermeasures against Black's plans. If Vassily now played 11...b5, I'd go 12.♗a5, followed by ♘c3, b4 and a4.

11...b6 A clever reply that keeps the position flexible.

12.♘c3 ♗b7 13.♗e1 ♖fc8 14.♖ac1 ♗e7 15.♘d2 b5

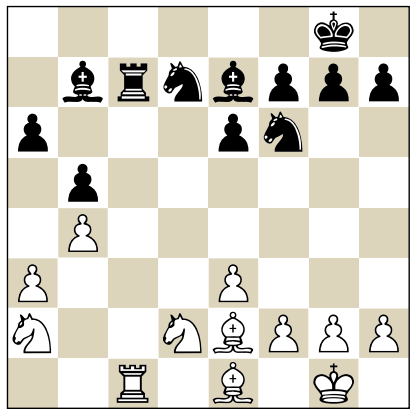


16.b4?

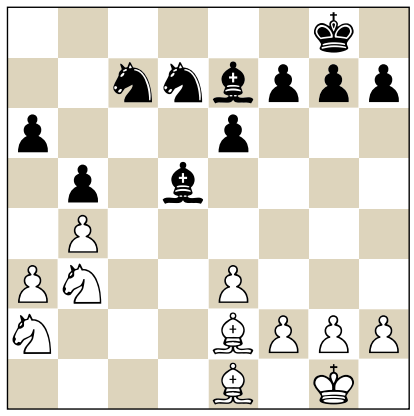
A clear error of judgement that will lead to a tough struggle for White.

I should have played 16.♘b3 ♗d8 17.f3 ♗b6 (17...♘d5 18.e4) 18.♗f2 ♘d5, but in my calculations I found it hard to keep the balance here. After the game I found that White is clearly better after 19.e4 ♘xc3 20.♖xc3 ♖xc3 21.bxc3 ♗xf2+ 22.♔xf2 ♗c8.

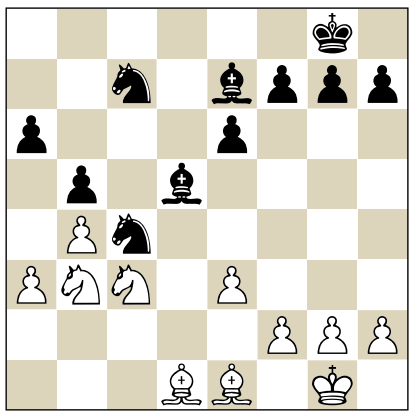
16...♖c7 17.♘a2 ♖ac8 18.♖xc7 ♖xc7 19.♖c1 This was what I was aiming at: the double rook exchange. But White's position is passive and not entirely without danger.



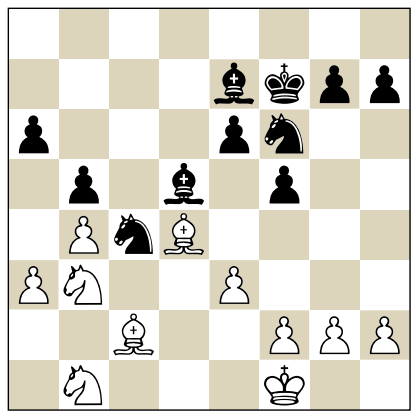
19...♘e8 20.♖xc7 ♘xc7 21.♘b3 ♗d5



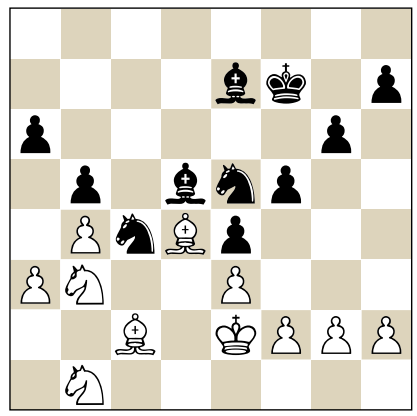
22.♗d1
Houdini prefers 22.♘ac1, and with accurate calculation this will hold on to the relatively weak a3-pawn. Still, I like my 22.♗d1, to keep the options of ♘c3 and ♗c3 and the possibility to jump to c5 with the knight.
22...♘b6 23.♘c3 ♘c4 Black has a very pleasant position, with annoying pressure against the a3-pawn.



24.♘b1 Passive defending, but I believe this was the best option.
24...f5
Now I realized I had problems. Black keeps the pressure and will bring his king into the fray as soon as possible.
25.♗c2 ♔f7 26.♗c3 ♘e8 27.♔f1 ♘f6 28.♗d4
I also considered 28.♘3d2 ♘g4 29.♘xc4 ♗xc4+ 30.♔g1.



28...♘d7
Here, 28...♘g4 offered more chances, but Vassily was worried about 29.h3 ♘ge5 30.♘c5 (best is 30.♘c3 ♗a8 31.♘b1, when White's position is passive, but defensible), but after 30...a5 31.bxa5 ♘xa5 32.♘d3 ♘ec6 Black retains some initiative.
29.♘3d2 e5 30.♗c3
If my memory serves me right, I was already in time-trouble here. Although the situation isn't that complex, I didn't like it and my next moves were difficult.
30...e4 31.♔e2 g6 32.♗d4 ♘de5 33.♘b3



33...♘d3?! This looks attractive, but 33...♘c6 would have been better, when after 34.♗c3 h6, Black can slow-

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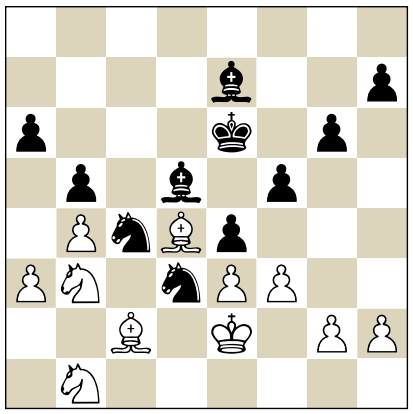
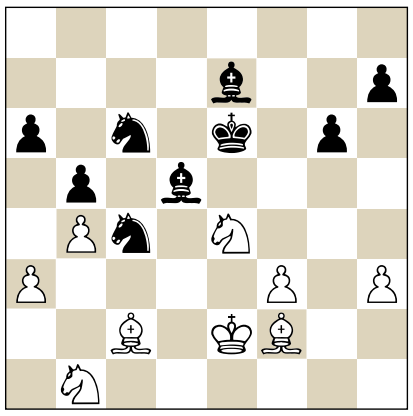
1988-2000

ly advance his pawns and try to create another weakness in White's camp.
34.f3 ♔**e6** After 34...exf3+ 35.gxf3 (35.♔xd3? ♗e4+ and the black pawn will march on irresistibly) 35...♘de5 Black retains some chances.



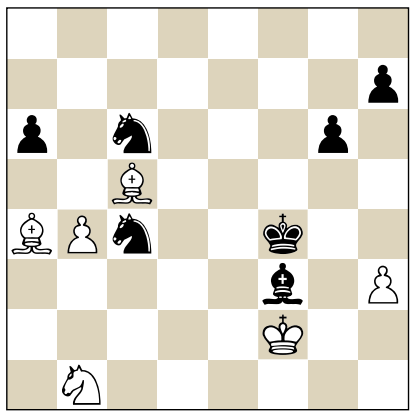
35.♘3d2 Here I missed the opportunity to immediately force a draw with 35.fxe4 fxe4 36.♘3d2, for instance 36...♗d6 37.g3 ♘xd2 38.♘xd2 ♘c1+ 39.♔f2 ♘d3+.
35...♗d6 36.h3 exf3+ 37.gxf3 ♘de5 38.e4 Houdini prefers 38.f4, but I think I will stick to my own choice.
38...fxe4 39.♘xe4 ♘c6 40.♗f2 ♗e7



41.♘c5+
On the first move after the time-control I failed to see that I should have played 41.♘ec3 to exchange the strong light-squared black bishop.
41...♗xc5 42.♗xc5 ♔e5 43.♔f2
The best defence, intending to avoid any ...♘d4 threat.
43...♔f4 44.a4
After a long think I concluded that I was close to the draw after 44.a4 and didn't consider other moves, thus missing Houdini's powerful move 44.♗f8!?.
44...bxa4 45.♗xa4 ♗xf3

MACAULEY PETERSON

Girls in a good mood during the 'Battle of the Sexes', a friendly game between a male and female team. (L. to r.) Victoria Cmilyte, Valentina Gunina, Tania Sachdev and Zhao Xue.



46.♘d2! My favourite move of the game, which leads to forced exchanges.
46...♘xd2
Or 46...♘6e5 47.♗c2 ♗b7 48.♘xc4 ♘xc4 49.♗d3 ♗d5 50.♗d6+ ♔g5 51.♗e7+ ♔h5 52.♗e2+ ♔h6 53.h4 ♔g7 54.♗c5 ♘a4 55.♗d4+ ♔h6, with a draw.
47.♗e3+ ♔f5 48.♗xc6
White is a pawn down, but the inevitable opposite-coloured bishops ending will guarantee the draw. I proposed a draw and after a brief thought, Vassily accepted. I heaved a deep sigh of relief. I very much didn't like the course of the game, but I was very happy with the outcome.
I like Gibraltar a lot and I am grateful to the sponsors and organizers and hope they will carry on forever. This tournament gave me a lot of confidence, especially after a series of bad results last year. I will always remember this game. Not because of the game itself, but because of the wonderful result it led to in this beautiful place. ■

Macauley Peterson produced the live commentary on behalf of the Gibraltar Chess Festival.

Gibraltar 2013

						TPR
1	Nikita Vitiugov	IGM	RUS	2694	8	2821
2	Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	IGM	FRA	2711	8	2777
3	Sandipan Chanda	IGM	IND	2590	8	2762
4	Nigel Short	IGM	ENG	2690	8	2715
5	Kiril Georgiev	IGM	BUL	2643	7½	2738
6	Michael Adams	IGM	ENG	2725	7½	2733
7	David Navara	IGM	CZE	2710	7½	2733
8	Gata Kamsky	IGM	USA	2740	7½	2697
9	Vassily Ivanchuk	IGM	UKR	2758	7½	2685
10	Yangyi Yu	IGM	CHN	2688	7½	2717
11	Ivan Salgado	IGM	ESP	2606	7½	2693
12	Daniel Fridman	IGM	GER	2667	7½	2644
13	Zhao Xue	IGM	CHN	2554	7½	2620
14	Le Quang Liem	IGM	VIE	2705	7	2717
15	Gawain Jones	IGM	ENG	2632	7	2672
16	Ruben Felgaer	IGM	ARG	2557	7	2634
17	Radoslaw Wojtaszek	IGM	POL	2723	7	2611
18	Alexey Shirov	IGM	LAT	2708	7	2605
19	Antoaneta Stefanova	IGM	BUL	2516	7	2611
20	Valentina Gunina	IM	RUS	2490	7	2593
21	Anna Muzychuk	IGM	SLO	2582	7	2586
22	Emil Sutovsky	IGM	ISR	2684	7	2521
23	Joseph Gallagher	IGM	SUI	2499	7	2538
24	Mateusz Bartel	IGM	POL	2629	7	2514
25	Stefan Kuipers	IM	NED	2431	7	2342

247 players, 10 rounds

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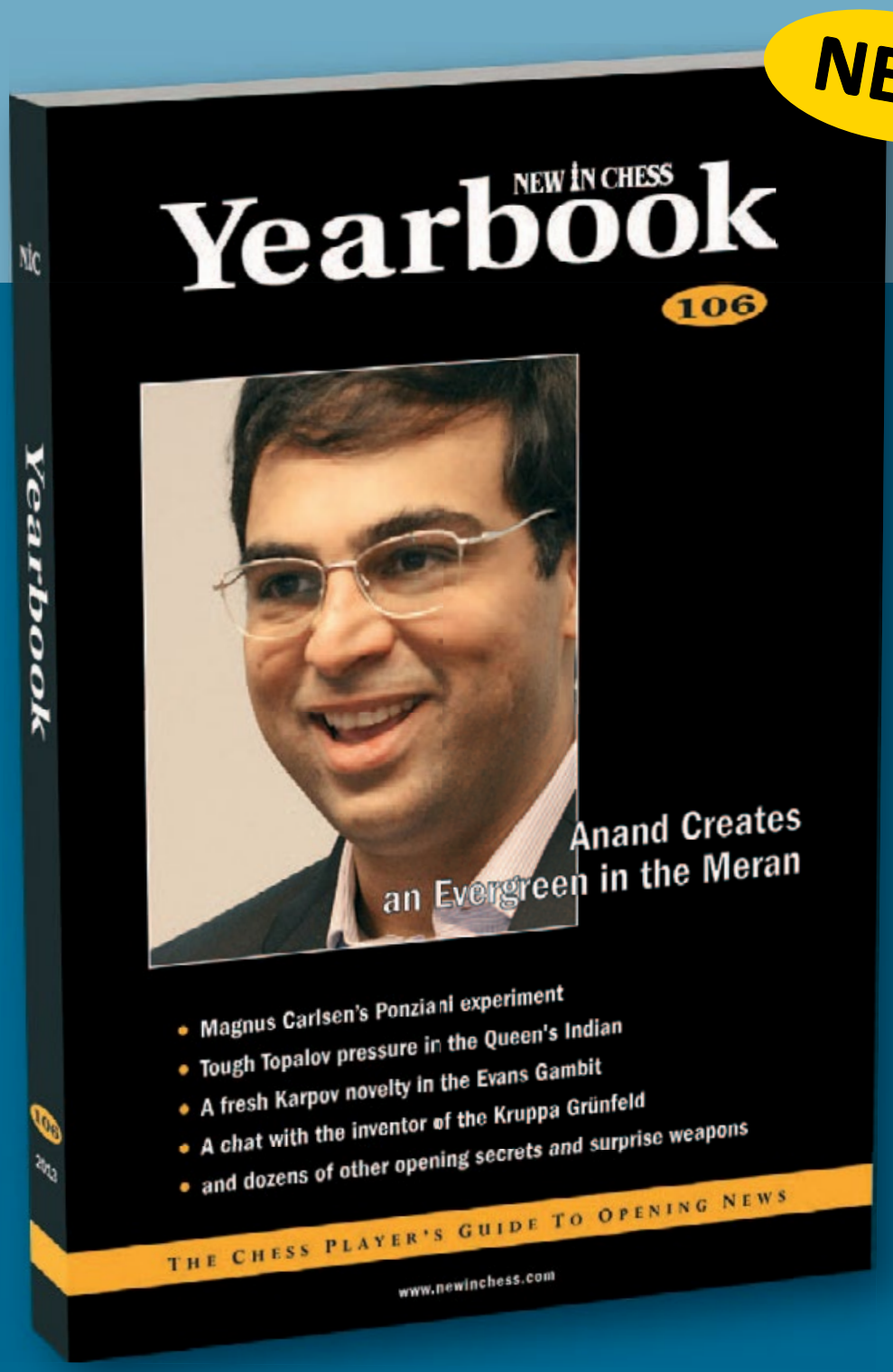
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- Is Baadur Jobava’s 13.g4 in the Fianchetto Grünfeld dangerous?
- Can White hit Black with a fianchetto in the Benoni?
- Is 7.♘g5 better than 7.♘h4 in the 6.d5 gambit of the Classical Queen’s Indian?
- Is Timman’s pet move 4...d6 solid enough in the Nimzo-Indian?
- Can White simply push his h-pawn against the Sveshnikov Sicilian?
- What was Botvinnik’s secret move in the Exchange Grünfeld?
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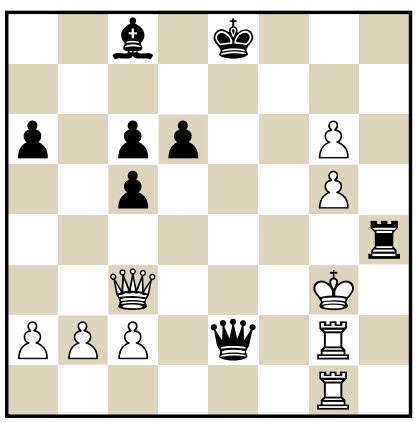
Yochanan Afek

Beware: Brilliancy!

Oversights are part of the practice of each and everyone of us. A great majority of them bear no special interest beyond the obvious lesson to avoid repeating them. In all six diagrams below forced mating lines were overlooked mostly by grandmasters. Could you possibly do better?

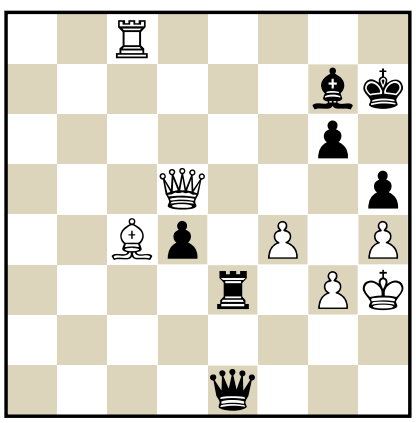
★☆☆☆☆



1. Black to move and win

At this point Black forced a draw by ...♖g4+-♖h4+. In fact he could force mate in three moves taking advantage of the overloaded white queen!

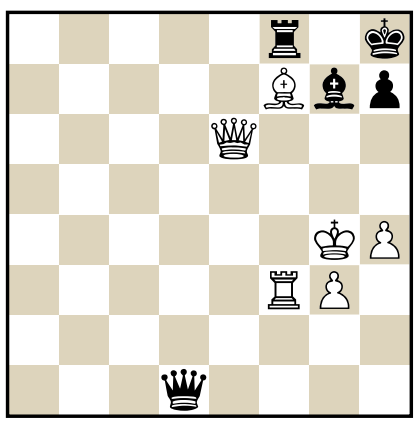
★☆☆☆☆



2. White to move and win

White rushed to protect his king with **1.♕g2??** but following **1...d3 2.♗g8+ ♔h6 3.♖c6 d2** he had to throw in the towel. He should have eyed the opponent's king.

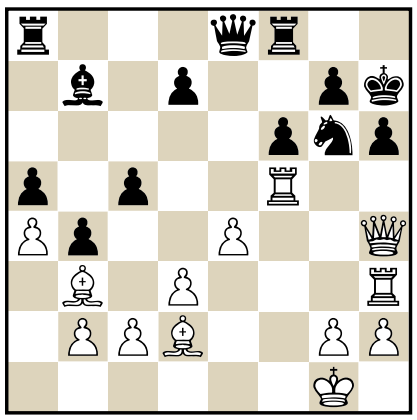
★★☆☆☆



3. Black to move and win

After **1...♕d4+ 2.♔h3 ♕b2 3.♗h5 ♖xf3 4.♗xf3 ♕f6 5.♕e4 ♗f8 6.♗e2 ♕g6 7.♕d4+ ♕g7 8.♕d5 ♕f6 9.♗c4 ♔g7 10.♕g8+ ♔h6 11.♗d3 ♕e7 12.♗f5** Black was in zugzwang. He overlooked a picturesque mate.

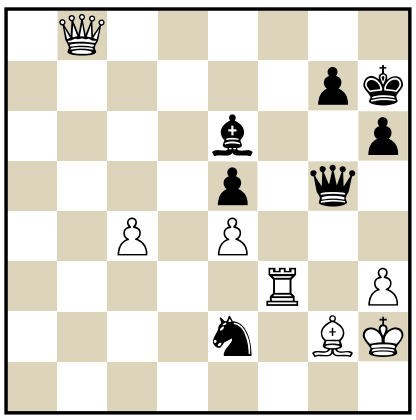
★★★☆☆



4. White to move and win

White played **1.♕f2** and won in the end. One would expect a strong GM to spot a brilliant six-mover.

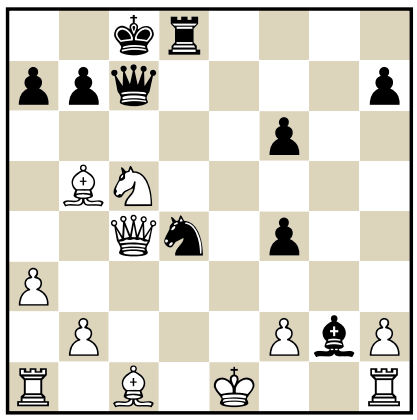
★★★☆☆



5. Black to move and win

Black, an exchange down, settled for a draw by repetition with **1...♘d4? 2.♖f8 ♘e2 3.♖f3 ♘d4 4.♖f8**, missing a magnificent mate.

★★★☆



6. Black to move and win

Black forced a perpetual by **1...♘f3+ 2.♔e2 ♘d4+** etc. He missed a mate of great beauty.

The number of stars roughly indicates their estimated level of difficulty: 1 is easiest and 5 most difficult. **Solutions on page 99**

Short Stories

Open Sesame!

Ah! Don't we just love the humble open tournament – that most egalitarian of competitions, where the hoi polloi hobnob with the coryphaei? Well, to a degree. Professionals would rather play round-robins as a rule – not so much out of snobbery, but for the simple reason that they usually pay better. Matches pay better still – just ask Boris Gelfand. Unsurprisingly it does make a substantial difference, nutritionally-speaking, if your gateau is sliced into 400, 10, or 2.

Elementary economics is thus the reason that we rarely see the absolute chess elite playing in swisses, and yet a great number of amateurs erroneously assume that it has something to do with the nebulous concept of 'Elo preservation' instead. In addition to missing the essential point, I suspect this notion is flawed in itself. While it can, perhaps, be misleading to extrapolate from one's own results, the various occasions when I have blown a huge number of rating points have almost invariably come from closed tournaments, not opens. The reason for this is not hard to discern: when you are in bad form in a strong round-robin, there is nowhere to hide. You lose; you are unhappy; you sleep badly; you are tired and depressed – therefore you lose again. You are trapped in a vicious cycle, from which escape appears all but impossible (it is not, of course – but tortured minds are irrational). On the other hand, in swisses you quickly drop to a level where, however poorly you are playing or badly you are feeling, you pulverize your opponents regardless. Well, that's my theory anyway. Willy Hendriks, in his award-winning book *Move First, Think Later* refers to chess as 'the sadistic exam' where you don't know how many questions there are going to be, and giving just one wrong answer can immediately terminate the paper. It is a witty and accurate analogy but I would add that, in that case, the round-robin should be described as 'the sadistic format'. Tennis players have it exceptionally easy: when they have lost their touch, they get knocked out in the first or second round and traipse home to lick their wounds. Chess players, by contrast, spend further days or weeks striving agonizingly to avoid abject humiliation, but often in vain.

Incidentally, on the subject of rating, Dr. John Nunn informed me in December that FIDE intends to abolish the practice of awarding 0.8 of an Elo point for beating someone rated 400 points or more below. While I understand this may be motivated by sound anti-inflationary principles (perhaps to stop a rabbit like myself from toppling Magnus from the head of the Elo list by beating a random 1200-rated player by 250-0 in a match), it also seems more than a little unfair not to reward someone for a victory, but penalizing them if they lose. Most grandmasters cannot afford not to play in opens, where playing much lower-rated opponents is commonplace, and punishing them when they do would be perverse. Only if these games are not rated at all, does this proposal make any sense...

My favourite open is Gibraltar – partly because of the substantial prizes, but primarily because, thus far, I have always done extremely well there. In six attempts, my worst result is a more-than-respectable equal second. In antithesis, I have shed 58 Elo points in 4 visits to Sarajevo (a round-robin, naturally), although it actually felt even direr. I have often wondered whether there is any pattern to one's performances, or whether the results are due to random fluctuations. A few years ago, the statistician Jeff Sonas – who was kind enough to analyse my career results – observed that I played a significant 55 Elo points weaker than average in May. As my second worst month was April, it was easy to conclude that chronic seasonal allergies were the cause of my plunge in form (although, of course, I am also more than capable of playing like an idiot even in the peak of health). Quite why I should outperform at the Rock though – other than that the organizers are friendly and the weather is relatively benign for Europe in January – is something of a mystery.

If there is a formula for success in opens, I don't know it. Given the necessity to win a lot of games, a

sharp repertoire would seem highly desirable, but it is equally possible to triumph through steady grinding. When White, the choice is more a matter of taste because of the first-move advantage but, when Black, the choice becomes critical: entering into a tactical melee against a wild, attacking caveman may leave you with a painful, cudgelled cranium. Conversely, keeping it too simple may allow some patzer to gleefully vacuum off all the pieces and make a draw (I meet enough of these desperately dull individuals even at Internet blitz chess, where nothing is at stake and the game is supposedly played for entertainment). Delicate assessments, however, get skewed by the abomination of double-rounds – particularly when one is middle-aged: should you play tactically against a highly competent but rather conservative player, knowing that your reserves of nervous energy will, most likely, be spent by the evening's round? I have got this decision wrong in the past...

Young players tend to make different errors, such as overestimating their 'battery' levels. In December, the 18-year-old soon-to-be Cambridge undergraduate Yang-Fan Zhou flew from the UAE all the way to London, and thence was immediately driven by car down to the annual Hastings Congress. The very decent form that he had shown in the World Cities Team Championship, just two days earlier, unsurprisingly abruptly deserted him, due to obvious fatigue. As I was sagely advised by Lajos Portisch many years ago, it is better to arrive a couple of days before a major event. Cutting it any finer entails a degree of risk, even when one only has to travel relatively short distances. Alas, due to pressures of both time and money, it is not always possible to follow this wise course.

Your writer has, with one accidental exception, thus far managed to avoid the bedlam of U.S. opens where just about any schedule is possible – even four games in a day – and all within the same tournament. In the unseemly desire to maximize profit, it has been forgotten, somewhere along the line, that these are sporting competitions. It is hard to understand why someone from a good European chess background, like Loek van Wely, should be fascinated by these ghoulish events. Indeed, he should be immensely grateful to the U.S. immigration authorities, who handcuffed and deported him last year, that he is no longer tempted (or allowed for that matter) to return. Nevertheless, I am in awe of those natives, such as Walter Browne, who have thrived in such harsh and unforgiving environments over the years. Just reading about the frenetic pace of his amazing career, in *The Stress of Chess ... and its Infinite Finesse* is enervating in itself.

'It was easy to conclude that chronic seasonal allergies were the cause of my plunge in form (although, of course, I am also more than capable of playing like an idiot even in the peak of health).'

Of course, the vast majority of chess players are amateurs, and, for them, one attraction the major U.S. opens have is the opportunity to compete for substantial prizes within various rating categories. While, as an idea, this may seem meritorious, it also opens the door wide-open to carpetbaggery. Europe is not immune from this disease either: in Gibraltar, at least one rating prize, worth thousands of pounds, went to an individual who had shamelessly dumped hundreds of points within the preceding months. He does not know it yet, but he won't be invited back next year. Unfortunately the dirty deed has already been done. It is by no means a victimless crime, because, of course, one deserving participant has been denied his just reward. Unfortunately, it is hard to see how such a thing can be policed without carefully examining the records of every single person who enters, and, quite frankly, this is not going to happen.

Were I an average player, with a normal job – a lawyer, say, like my brother – and only had time for a couple of tournaments a year, I would forget all about financial considerations and ensure that I went somewhere nice (preferably warm) for a good holiday. There are plenty of choices: South Africa, Laos, or Guam for the exotically inclined; the Mediterranean for somewhere a bit closer to home. It need not be terribly strong: a sprinkling of titled players would suffice for norm opportunities. Far more important would be a comfortable hotel and exquisite food. Above all else, a friendly ambience is essential: there is nothing worse than feeling unwanted. While Gibraltar has rightfully earned its position as the premier open in the world for aspiring players and professionals, for the sheer, laid-back fun factor, it is hard to beat Thailand. If you know of anywhere better, I would be delighted to hear from you. ■

Baden-Baden

Eric van Reem

The 'gingerbread-like' town of Baden-Baden has a rich chess tradition. In 1870 the popular spa in the south of Germany welcomed the first major international tournament on German soil that was won by Adolf Anderssen. In 1925 Alexander Alekhine celebrated one of his greatest tournament victories here, amassing 16 points from 20 games. For the past seven years Baden-Baden has been the home of the Bundesliga champions with the same name. What better place for Vishy Anand, first board on the Baden-Baden team, to win his first classical tournament since 2008! As the early leader Fabiano Caruana collapsed in the turbulent last rounds of the Grenke Chess Classic, the World Champion crowned a return to good form, leapfrogging to clear first place with two dashing wins.

'Finally! Won my game and then 3 nerve wracking hours watching Fridman-Caruana wondering about the tiebreak. What drama!' The tweet that World Champion Vishy Anand sent into the world immediately after the last game of the first Grenke Chess Classic had finished, said it all. The relief that finally, after numerous troublesome performances, he had won a tournament again, his first victory since Morelia/Linares 2008, was immense.

The three-hour wait started after Anand had defeated Arkadij Naiditsch with the ease and velocity that was his trademark in his younger years (see his notes further on, in which the World Champion explains why he won so smoothly). From that moment onwards Fabiano Caruana knew that he had to defeat Daniel Fridman to secure a playoff for the title. The Italian reached an endgame in which he was a pawn up and came very close, but the German hung on and after 86 moves and almost seven hours of play, Caruana had to cease his efforts.

'I had never thought that I would catch Caruana after eight rounds', Anand smiled after the closing dinner. The turnaround came in the penultimate round, Round 9, when his rival stumbled against Mickey Adams and saw his one-point lead go up in smoke. With one round to go, Caruana, who had been in the driver's seat

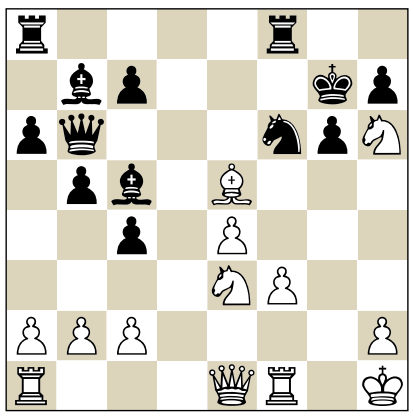
Vishy Anand: 'I had never thought that I would catch Caruana after eight rounds.'

ERIC VAN REEM

Anand in the footsteps of Anderssen and Alekhine

from Round 1, suddenly had to share the lead with Anand. Actually, it was a small miracle that the Italian, who arrived from a dramatic start of the year in Wijk aan Zee, had been dominating the field for so long. Looking back he readily admitted that he was unhappy with his overall play in Baden-Baden and felt that his bad form finally came back to haunt him in the last two rounds.

Of crucial weight were Caruana's two wins against Arkadij Naiditsch. In both games the German number one had excellent winning chances, but instead of converting his advantage he blundered away two points. This is how the tables were turned in their wild tussle in Round 8.



Naiditsch-Caruana, Round 8
position after 24...♘xf6

25.♘eg4? 25.♖d1!!, leaving both white knights en prise, was the move. The main line is 25...♗xe3 26.♖d7+! ♔xh6 (26...♔h8 27.♘g4!) 27.♕h4+ ♘h5 28.♗g7 mate. **25...♗d4 26.♗xd4 ♕xd4 27.♖d1 ♕xb2 28.♘xf6??** When after the game a downhearted Naiditsch was asked about his missed wins, he exclaimed, 'I think there were 10 – I counted 8, but maybe I missed some!' At this point he let at least two slip. For instance 28.c3

Vishy Anand on Arkadij Naiditsch: 'This guy is on fire.'

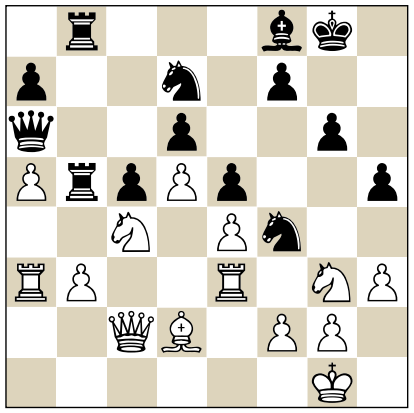
would have done the job. **28...♕xf6 29.♘g4 ♕f4!** With computer-like precision Caruana converted this position into a full point.

After his third place in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament, Vishy Anand prepared for Baden-Baden in his apartment in Bad Soden, Germany. He did so without his second Peter Heine Nielsen. During the press conference after the last game Anand was asked how he felt about the agreement between Magnus Carlsen and his long-time second. 'Peter told me last year, that he had an offer from Magnus. We spoke about it, and we came to a reasonable agreement. Well, he has worked with Magnus in the past and he was working with Magnus and me at the same time, round about 2006-2007. He has been a big part of my team, but I am fine with it. We thought to do Wijk aan Zee, for old time's sake, and then he switched to Magnus.'

In the first four rounds, Anand played three blacks and could not win a game. In Round 5 he finally notched up his first win.

RL 7.1 – C65
Vishy Anand
Arkadij Naiditsch
Baden-Baden 2013 (5)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4.d3 d6 5.c3 ♗e7 6.♘bd2 0-0 7.♘f1 ♖e8 8.♘g3 ♗f8 9.0-0 ♗d7 10.h3 h6 11.♖e1 ♘e7 12.♗xd7 ♕xd7 13.d4 ♘g6 14.c4 c5 15.d5 b5 16.cxb5 ♕xb5 17.♕c2 ♘d7 18.♘d2 ♘f4 19.♖e3 g6 20.a4 ♕a6 21.a5 ♖ab8 22.♘c4 ♖b4 23.b3 ♖eb8 24.♗d2 ♖4b5 25.♖a3 h5?!



A careless move, as it leaves the f4-knight with no squares to retreat to.

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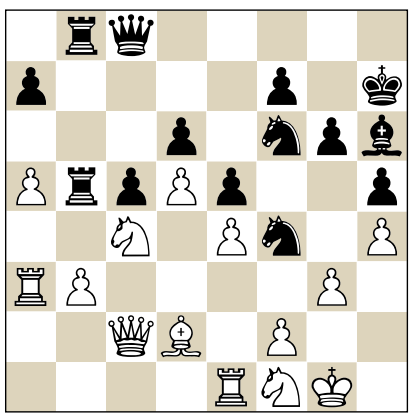
26.h4 ♘f6 27.♘f1 When Anand played this his plans were crystal-clear, as he told IM Lawrence Trent afterwards in the post-game interview. He had other options, but 'if you see a piece, then you want to get it!' Naiditsch attempted to solve his problems with the pseudo-aggressive **27...♗h6?** which may objectively have been the losing move. **28.♖e1! ♔h7 29.g3 ♕c8**



30.f3 Anand: 'A cold-blooded move. I made it with some trepidation, but I couldn't see a way for him.' **30...♕h3 31.gxf4 ♕xf3 32.♕d1!** Ruling out any counterplay based on the g4-square. His first intention was to play the nice 32.b4!, to allow the distant a3-rook to control matters on the kingside, but he didn't like the idea of Black getting some decent squares for his pieces. **32...♕h3 33.fxe5 ♖xb3** Desperation. **34.♖xb3 ♖xb3 35.exf6 ♖f3 36.♕e2 ♗xd2 37.♘cxd2 ♖f4 38.♕h2** Black resigned.

After the rest day Anand needed some time to pick up speed, but in the final three rounds he did what he had to do and scored 2½ points against the Germans. Once he had secured tournament victory, he reflected on his improved form this year. His last reasonably successful tournament before 2013 had been Wijk aan Zee 2011, where he finished clear second behind Nakamura on +4. 'After that basically I went over a cliff and the next five tournaments were pretty awful.' Referring to this year's Wijk aan Zee, where he somewhat spoiled an otherwise fine performance with his only loss in the last round, he commented, 'I was hoping I wouldn't do a Wang Hao today!'

ERIC VAN REEM

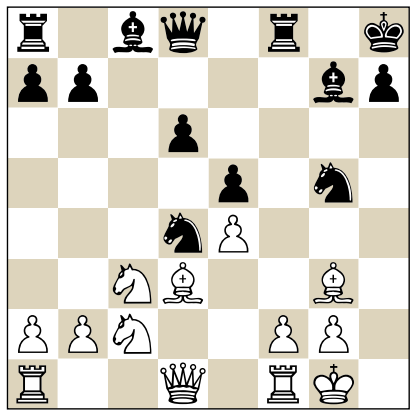
The venue was the Chess Centre in the newly renovated Cultural House LA8.

Later he added: 'After Bilbao 2011 my big problem was getting interesting positions, where I had chances. This year the new problem has been: exploiting those chances – against Fridman here, Hou Yifan in Wijk aan Zee or last year against Nakamura and Adams at the London Chess Classic I've been gifting people half points. If it wasn't for that, my results would be much better. Still, it's a hundred times better to have the second problem!'

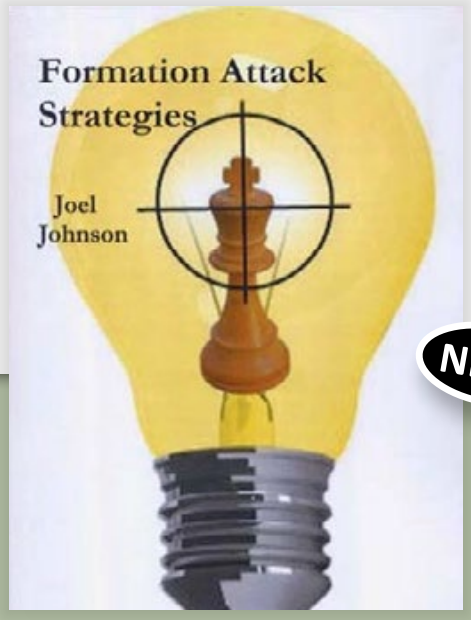
If there had been a special prize for fighting spirit it no doubt would have gone to Arkadij Naiditsch. As Anand rightly noted, 'This guy is on fire.' Playing enterprising chess, but too often shooting himself in the foot, Naiditsch only drew two of his games. In Round 6 he played the game of the tournament.

KI 8.10 – E97
Daniel Fridman
Arkadij Naiditsch
Baden-Baden 2013 (6)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘f3 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.0-0 ♘c6 8.♗e3 ♘g4 9.♗g5 f6 10.♗h4 g5 11.♗g3 ♘h6 12.dxe5 fxe5 13.h3 ♔h8!? Was this a novelty? Naiditsch and his friend Etienne Bacrot, who won the Elo Open in Baden-Baden, burst into laughter when asked about this move after the game. **14.c5 g4 15.hxg4 ♗xg4 16.cxd6 cxd6 17.♘d2 ♗c8 18.♘c4 ♘d4 19.♘e3 ♘f7 20.♘c2 ♘g5 21.♗d3!?** Fridman was considering 21.♕d3 and later deeply regretted not playing it.



21...♘df3+!! Wow! ... **22.gxf3 ♕d7 23.♗e2 ♖f6** Naiditsch thought he was winning on the spot, but had missed his opponent's reply. **24.♘d5!** Fridman explained that unfortunately this move took him too much time. He'd thought he could defend with 24.♘e3 ♕h3 25.♘g4 ♗xg4 26.fxg4, which even wins against every move other than the problem he discovered: 26...♖af8!. **24...♖h6 25.f4 ♘h3+ 26.♔g2 exf4** Lawrence Trent in the commentary box showed the fantastic line 26...♘xf4+ 27.♔f3 ♖h2!! 28.♗xh2 (28.♔e3! saves it for White) 28...♕h3+ 29.♗g3



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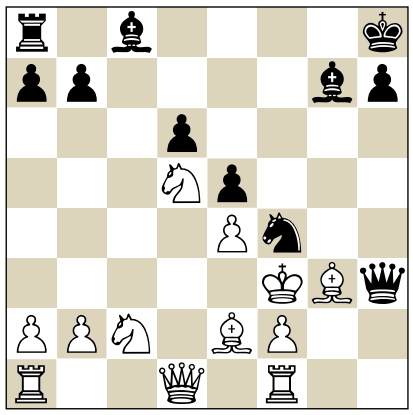
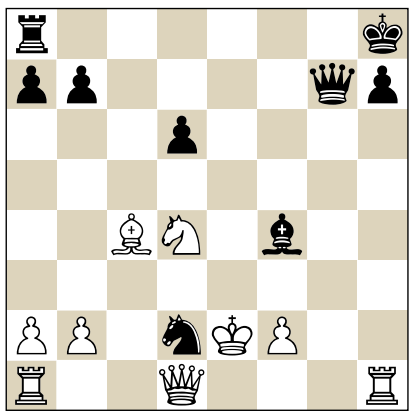


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

29...♘g2!!, and mate can't be stopped. **27.♗h2 f3+! 28.♗xf3 ♘g5 29.♘f4 ♖xh2+! 30.♔xh2 ♗e5 31.♔g2 ♗xf4 32.♖h1 ♕g7 33.♔f1 ♗e6 34.♘d4 ♗c4+ 35.♗e2 ♘xe4! 36.♗xc4?** The losing move. **36...♘d2+ 37.♔e2**



37...d5!! Vishy Anand, who followed the game in the press room, was impressed. Black should be doing well after simply taking the bishop with 37...♘xc4, but he needs to avoid the cunning trap Fridman had seen during the game: 37...♕xd4?! 38.♖xh7+!! ♔xh7 39.♕h1+, when the black king is suddenly also in danger. **38.♕c2 ♖e8+ 39.♔d1 ♘xc4 40.♕c3 ♖e4 41.♘f5 ♘xb2+ 42.♔c2 ♖e2+ 43.♔b3 ♕xc3+ 44.♔xc3 ♗e5+ 45.♘d4 ♖e4** White resigned.

Naiditsch was the undeniable crowd-pleaser, but he was obviously not happy with his overall result. After the last game against Anand he left the building in disgust, but returned to make a statement. 'It is pretty testing to play two major tournaments in a row. In Wijk aan Zee I had to fight really hard and as you can see here, I try to win every game. In the end I lost too much energy and after my very disappointing game against Caruana in Round 8, I was devastated and had psychological difficulties to find the right motivation to play the last two games.'

The tournament was designed to give German players the opportunity to cross swords with international top players. In the end only Naiditsch (who else?) won a game against Adams, but the other Germans, Daniel Fridman and Georg Meier, failed to score against the guests.

Georg Meier was the best German player. Meier, who is studying business management in St. Louis, joked that the spectators probably thought a new player had entered the tournament for the second half, in which he could have scored 4½ from 5. He noted that he'd perhaps made three mistakes in the five games of the second half, while he was averaging ten a game at the beginning. He was pleased by the support of the federation: 'I actually decided to start studying in the U.S. two years ago, because there was absolutely no sign that the federation would do anything for the top German players. Oddly enough, there are some interesting tournaments now, like Dortmund and Baden-Baden, in which I love to play.'

Which leaves the question if we will see a second Grenke Chess Classic? Main sponsor Wolfgang Grenke, the German Chess Federation and the organizers were pleased with the first edition. The fact that their most prominent club member Vishy Anand won the tournament was a nice bonus. At the prizegiving ceremony Grenke said that in the coming years he wants to continue the tradition of important international chess tournaments in Baden-Baden. The town not only has a rich chess history, all conditions for a long-lasting modern tradition are at hand as well: a wonderful newly renovated venue, the Cultural House LA8 with its own chess centre, a prominent chess-loving sponsor and a highly experienced team of organizers.

NOTES BY
Vishy Anand

SI 1.9 – B52
Arkadij Naiditsch
Vishy Anand
Baden-Baden 2013 (10)

The last round, as usual, started a bit early, at 1 p.m. instead of 3 p.m. Arkadij had just come off two losses, whereas I found myself rather unexpectedly in joint first place. Just one round before, Caruana had a one-point lead, and at that point thoughts of first place had really drifted out of my head. I still wanted to make a good showing in the last two games, but I didn't expect that I would be in contention for first place again after Fabiano lost to Adams in Round 8 and I won against Fridman.

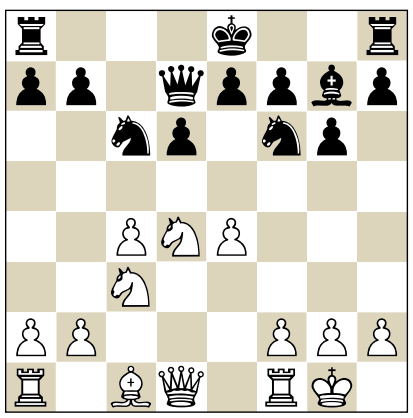
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+

He paused for a second, picked up his bishop and gave check. I haven't done spectacularly well against 3.♗b5+ results-wise, but on the other hand I had actually spent some time looking at it.

3...♗d7 4.♗xd7+ ♕xd7 5.c4 ♘f6 6.♘c3 g6 7.d4 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗g7 9.0-0

Deviating from 9.f3, which Magnus played against me in Bilbao last autumn.

9...♘c6



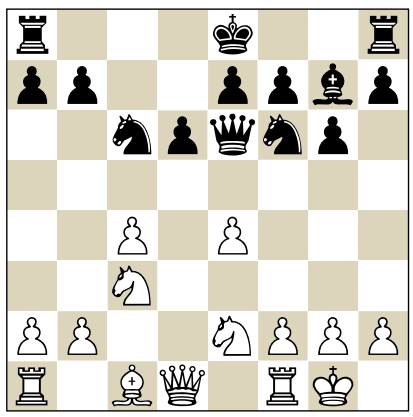
10.♘de2

Here you can no longer play 10.f3 because of 10...♘xe4.

Funnily enough, right before the tournament started I ended up with this position and kind of noticed that 10...♕e6 was possible. So I put it on the board and did a reference search to see how many games had been played with this move. And of course Kasparov vs. The World from 1999 popped up, which I had completely forgotten about. I didn't do much analysis, but briefly looked at it and it seemed to me, and it still does, that I'd rather have the two pawns than the exchange.

10...♕e6

This is a nice and forcing line. The point is that it is very tricky for White now to defend both these pawns and he will not get his usual b3 and f3 structure. So White is kind of obliged to go into this line where he wins an exchange against two pawns.



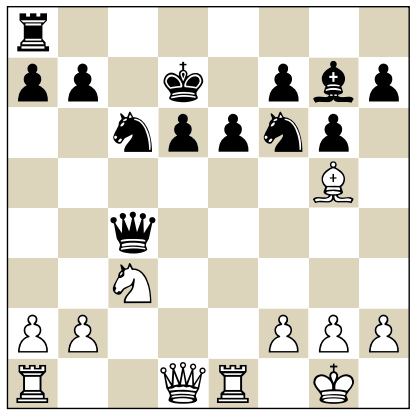
11.♘d5 ♕xe4 12.♘c7+ ♔d7 13.♘xa8 ♕xc4 14.♘c3

Kasparov played 14.♘b6+. I don't know if that is a better move. I am not particularly impressed by White's position anyway. The rationale goes that after 14...axb6 this pawn is weak on b6, even if that is a very debatable conclusion.

14...♖xa8 15.♗g5

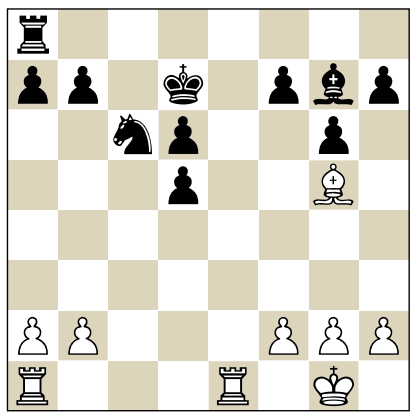
A natural developing move that has been seen a couple of times. But you don't need to study every game. You just look at the position and you realize that if White had a pawn on f4 instead of f2, for instance, this would look like an Austrian Attack. There, normally White would have a pawn on c2 and still Black would have good compensation. The position just looks so nice for Black that I could not take it seriously.

15...e6 16.♖e1

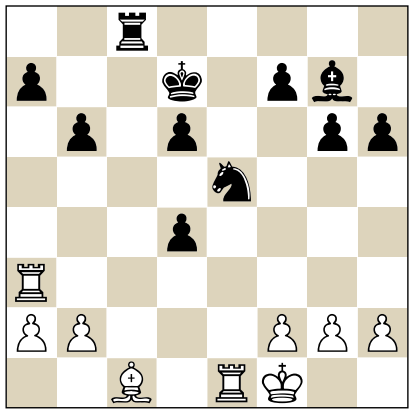


Here Black can make many moves that keep the position, for instance 16...h6, and quietly move the king to f8 and claim that the two central pawns are worth far more than the exchange. On the other hand, with the queens on the board you have to keep watching out for tactics (for instance 16...♖d8 walks into 17.♕f3). My thoughts during the game were that if I keep the queens on I have to continue calculating variations and anyway my king will be stuck in the centre, which will make it difficult to start pushing in the centre. So the following idea of trading off the queens with 16...♘d5 started to appeal to me a lot, although it is of course depressing to convert these two pawns into doubled d-pawns. I thought I could live with that. Once the queens are off, the tactics drop and Black can actually get on with slowly pushing White back.

16...♘d5 17.♘xd5 ♕xd5 18.♕xd5 exd5

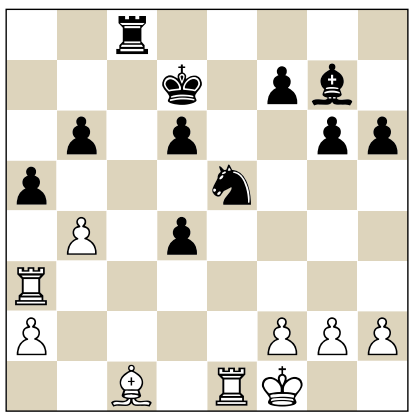


19.♖ad1 h6 20.♗c1 d4 21.♖d3 ♖c8 22.♖b3 b6 23.♔f1 ♘e5 24.♖a3



24...a5?! I think 24...♖c7 is better, when after the sample line 25.h3 g5 (25...f5 26.f4 ♘c6) 26.f4 gxf4 27.♗xf4 my knight on e5 is safe forever, because White cannot touch it with the f-pawn any longer. What Black wants to do now is play 27...♔e6 and next the king goes to d5, and suddenly Black can move the knight and put the bishop on e5 (there'll be details, I'll have the h-pawn first and so on). Basically, once the king comes to d5 all endgames improve for Black. I have to admit that the computer is not impressed and thinks White is completely equal here, but I don't understand it; it seems to me that Black is just doing very well. So here I was already optimistic, which was what led to the text-move.

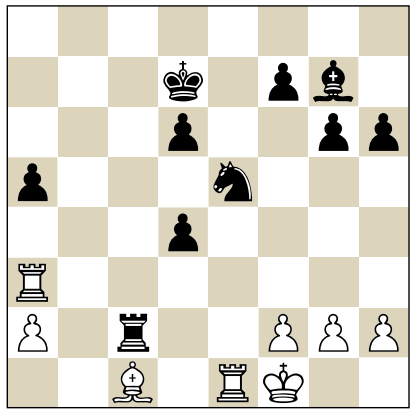
25.b4!



25...♖c2 The alternative was 25...axb4 26.♖a7+ ♔c6 27.f4 ♘d3 28.♖d1 ♘c5 29.♖xf7 ♗h8 30.♗d2 b3 31.axb3 ♘xb3 32.♖h7 h5 33.♖h6 ♖g8, and at first I thought this should be better for Black, but on second thoughts this is not clear to me. I have this pawn mass, but they are not connected and my king will have to help them to get across.

26.bxa5 bxa5

This is what I had seen and now I am threatening ...♘c4 and White will just get squashed on the queenside. But just as I was about to play 25...♖c2, or immediately after I played it, I don't recall exactly, I realized I had missed the following move:

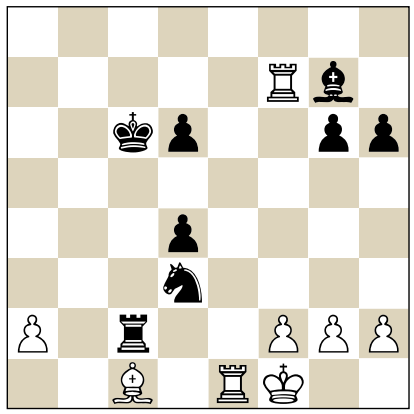


27.♖xa5! Played immediately. I was quite annoyed at myself, as 24...a5 was exactly the kind of move that was unnecessary. I could have played 24...♖c7 and built it up a bit more.

27...♘d3 28.♖a7+ ♔c6

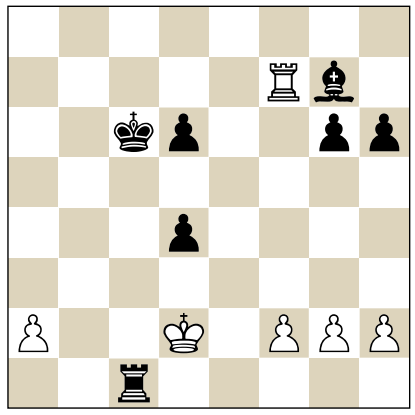
I tried to think of a better move, like 28...♔d8, but the problem is that White plays 29.♖a8+!, and I have not really gained anything.

29.♖xf7



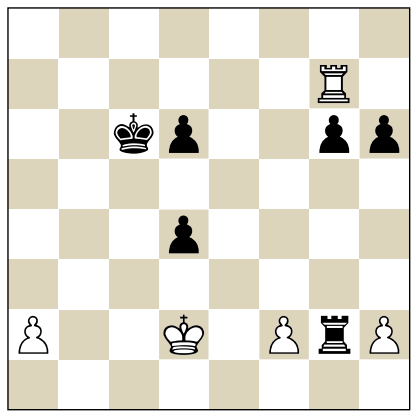
29...♘xe1 Now I was in the line and found that I just had to live with it. What I had missed was that after 29...♗e5 White has 30.♗xh6! (somehow the pawn had been defended for so long that I had completely forgotten that White can simply take it) 30...♘xe1 31.♔xe1 d3 32.♖f3, and this position is completely fine for White. So my only chance is the rook endgame. And in the endgame I have to take the g-pawn; taking the a-pawn would be useless.

30.♔xe1 ♖xc1+ 31.♔d2



If I may explain what is going on... There is a defence, I don't know who it is named after, the third rank defence. Black has a rook on a2 and a king on c4 and a pawn on d4. White keeps his rook on the third till ...d3 happens, then it goes to d8 and keeps harassing Black with checks. That works even with two d-pawns, because whenever the king tries to come to e3, you start the checks again. So my only hope is to combine it with what I am going to do with the h-pawn.

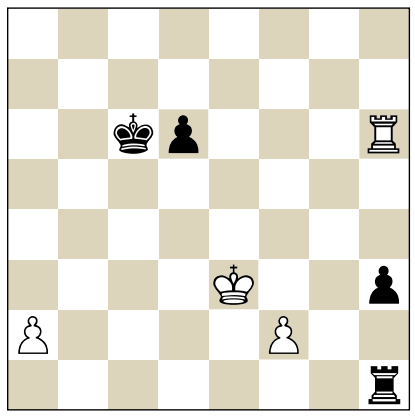
31...♖g1 32.♖xg7 ♖xg2



33.♔e1?? And he panicked with this instant reaction. In fact, 33.♔e1 is a sophisticated move; it just happens to be a blunder. The point is that after 33.♔e2 your first tendency is to think that you're allowed ...d3+ and therefore ♔e1 looks very clever. But in fact, ...d3+ doesn't help much, because with the d- and h-pawns I don't think I can really win, especially if White has a pawn on either side. But what 33.♔e1 does allow is the check on h1 on move 34, and this is a vital tempo.

The difference can be seen from

33.♔e2 ♖xh2 34.♖xg6 h5 35.♖h6 h4 36.♔d3 h3 (White also draws after 36...♔c5 37.a4 ♖h1 38.a5 h3 39.a6 ♖a1 40.♔d2 ♖a2+ 41.♔d1) 37.♔xd4 ♖h1 38.♔e3



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

ERIC VAN REEM

Blissfully unaware of the events ahead, Fabiano Caruana listens to a chat between Vishy Anand and his trainer Vladimir Chuchelov on the opening night.

and White is in time to control the black h-pawn and put his king on a square where the black rook cannot give check to it.

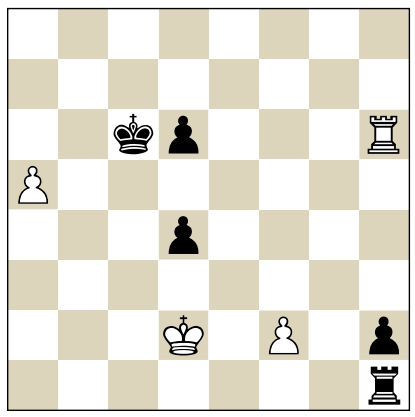
33...♖xh2 34.♖xg6 ♖h1+ 35.♔d2

In case of 35.♔e2 Black plays 35...h5.

35...h5 36.♖h6

36.♔d3 h4 37.♔xd4 h3 does not work for White, as he has to have his rook behind the passed pawn, so on h6, and his king has to drop back, so that the black rook cannot move away from h1 with check. And you cannot do this in one move. Had my rook been on h2, this would have been perfectly viable.

36...h4 37.a4 h3 38.a5 h2

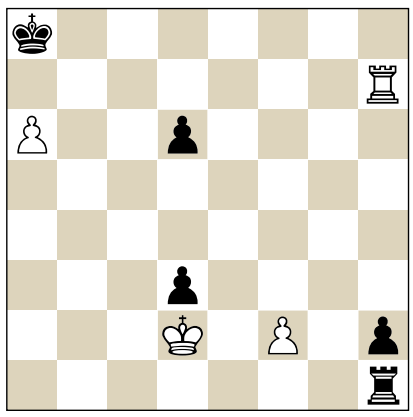


Here you can calculate very quickly that Black is winning. White cannot move his f-pawn, because then ...♖a1 wins, when ...♖xh2, ♖a2+ will win the rook. So White's only hope is to sit as long as possible like this. But even that doesn't work any longer, because I will simply take the a-pawn, and I can do this by zugzwang, and then walk my king across.

So what is the zugzwang? The first thing to do is to use up a couple of moves right away.

39.a6 ♔c7 40.♖h7+ ♔b8 41.♔e2 d3+ I have to nail his king. Otherwise White just keeps waiting with his king on the squares d2 and e2.

42.♔d2 ♔a8



And now it's over. I still have two waiting moves with my pawn. I can play ...d5 and I can even play ...d4. White has one waiting move left, which he will use up with his next move.

43.♖h5 The king could no longer move, as on every move I would check with the rook and then queen.

43...♔a7 44.♖h6

This is clever, because 44...♔xa6 45.♖xd6+ would complicate my task, although even this wins. But you want to keep all the pawns you can, so:

44...d5 The rook has to stay on the h-file, so he has to give up the pawn.

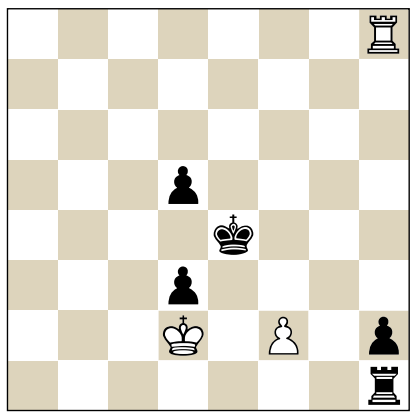
45.♖h8 ♔xa6 Now it's quite simple. I walk my king over to c4...

46.♖h6+ ♔b5 47.♖h8 ♔c4

Now there is even an alternative way of winning. The threat is 48...♖a1 49.♖xh2 ♖a2+ and after 50.♔d1 ♔c3 White is not in time to play 51.♖c8+. So he can't allow that.

48.♖c8+ ♔d4 49.♖h8 ♔e4

And here he resigned.

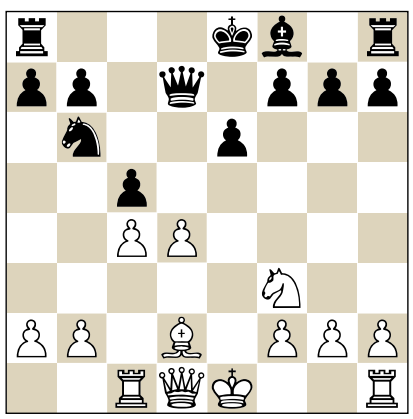


The winning plan is the following: 50.♖h3 ♔f4. Again it's zugzwang: White cannot control the third and watch my h-pawn, so he has to move up the board and I first go and pick up the f-pawn: 51.♖h8 ♔f3 52.♖f8+ ♔g2 53.♖g8+ ♔xf2 54.♖h8 ♔f3. The king walks back: 55.♖f8+ ♔e4 56.♖h8 and now that the f-pawn has been removed I can win with 56...♖a1 57.♖xh2 ♖a2+.

Fabiano Caruana

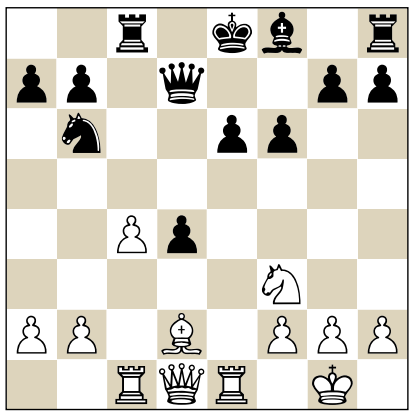
FR 7.4 – C10
Fabiano Caruana
Georg Meier
Baden-Baden 2013 (1)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♘f3 ♘gf6 6.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7.♗e3 ♘d5 8.♗d2 c5 9.♗b5+ ♗d7 10.♗xd7+ ♕xd7 11.c4 ♘b6 12.♖c1



12...f6 So far we've been following theory. This last move looks a little bit strange, but it makes sense to prevent ♘e5. Georg had played it before, so I had checked it a bit before the game. If Black plays a standard move like 12...♗e7 13.dxc5 ♗xc5 14.b4 ♗e7 15.c5 ♘d5 16.♘e5 ♕c7 17.♕a4+, he will be forced to move his king.

13.0-0 cxd4 14.♖e1 ♖c8

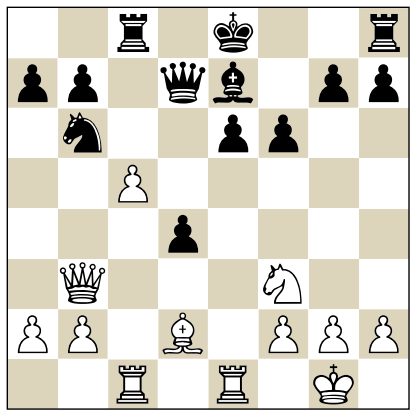


15.♕b3 Indirectly attacking e6 and preparing to play c5.
After 15.♕e2 e5 the sacrifice doesn't offer much: 16.♘xe5 fxe5 17.♕xe5+ ♔f7, and Black's king escapes.

15...♗e7

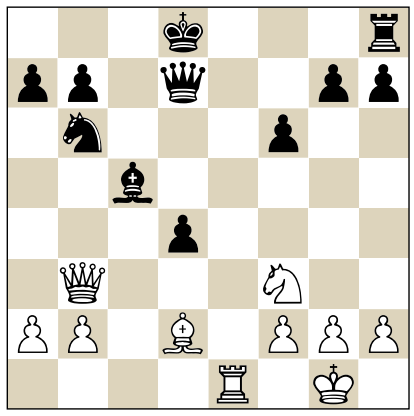
I thought it would be very dangerous for Black to play with his king in the centre. However, as the game shows, the move isn't a mistake.
15...e5? 16.♘xe5 fxe5 17.♖xe5+ is devastating now. After 15...♔f7 16.♕d3 the position is very unclear, but White will have long-term compensation. I don't plan on capturing on d4 immediately, first I'll try to kick Black's knight with b4 and c5.

16.c5



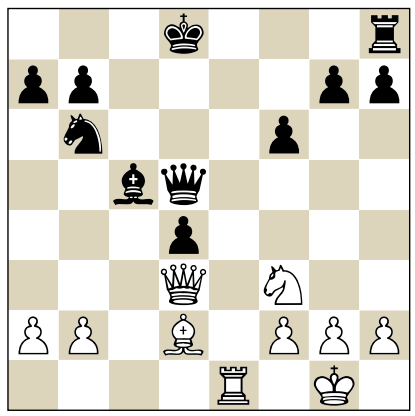
16...♖xc5 16...♘d5? 17.♘xd4 e5 18.♘b5 leaves Black's knight hanging on d5; 18...♗xc5 (18...0-0 19.♘d6 wins) 19.♖ed1, and Black is losing material.

17.♖xc5 ♗xc5 18.♖xe6+ ♔d8 19.♖e1



It's actually only here that my preparation finished. I thought that White's initiative is very unpleasant to face, but over the board I realized Black has a lot of defensive resources.

19...♕d5 20.♕d3

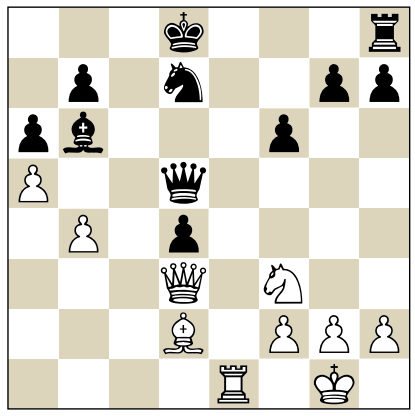


20...♘d7?! This move doesn't meet the demands of the position. Black has to think about how to get his king to safety as fast as possible, so 20...♔c8! was logical and correct: 21.♗f4 (21.♖c1 ♔b8 leads nowhere) 21...♗d6 22.♗xd6 ♕xd6 23.♘xd4 ♔b8, and this is slightly better for White but no more.

21.b4 ♗b6 22.a4 a6?

Another careless move. Black urgently had to trade rooks with 22...♖e8, with good chances to defend. If 23.♖c1 ♖e4! is a satisfactory response.

23.a5

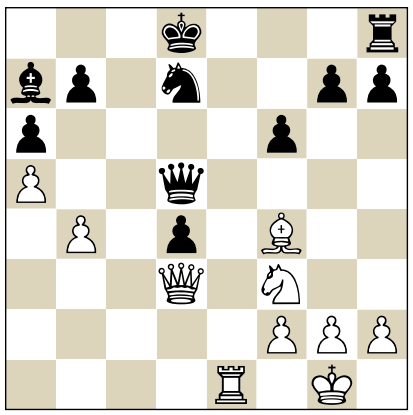


23...♗a7? Surprisingly, this is already the losing move.

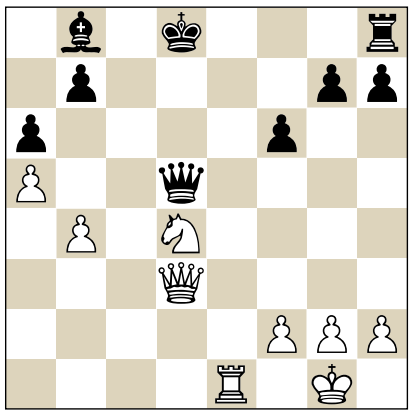
Baden-Baden 2013 — **cat. XIX**

				1	2	3	4	5	6		TPR
1 Vishy Anand	IGM	IND	2780	* *	½ ½	½ ½	½ ½	1 1	½ 1	6½	2811
2 Fabiano Caruana	IGM	ITA	2757	½ ½	* *	1 ½	½ 0	1 1	½ ½	6	2778
3 Georg Meier	IGM	GER	2640	½ ½	0 ½	* *	½ ½	0 1	½ 1	5	2729
4 Michael Adams	IGM	ENG	2725	½ ½	½ 1	½ ½	* *	0 ½	½ ½	5	2712
5 Arkadij Naiditsch	IGM	GER	2716	0 0	0 0	1 0	1 ½	* *	½ 1	4	2642
6 Daniel Fridman	IGM	GER	2667	½ 0	½ ½	½ 0	½ ½	½ 0	* *	3½	2614

However, Black is already in deep trouble: 23...♗c7 24.♘xd4 ♔c8 25.♖c1 ♔b8 26.♗e3 ♘e5 27.♕e2, and Black will come under a strong attack after b5.
24.♗f4! A nice position. Black can hardly move!

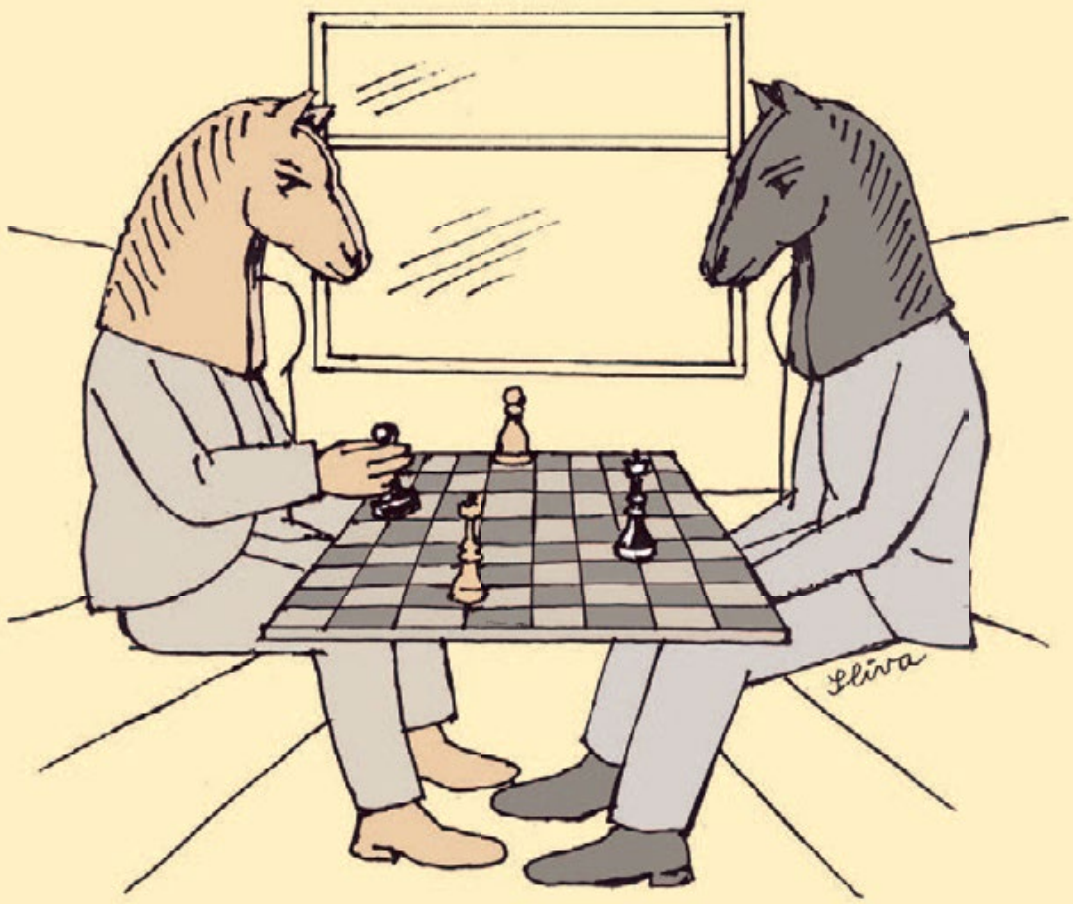


24...♘b8 Georg mentioned a nice variation after the game: 24...g5 25.♗g3 g4 26.♕e2! gxf3 27.♕e7+ ♔c8 28.♕e8+ ♖xe8 29.♖xe8 mate.
I was mainly concerned about the logical 24...♘f8, transferring the knight to e6, after which White has to find 25.♕c2! ♘e6 26.♖xe6! ♕xe6 27.♕c7+ ♔e8 28.♕xb7, and Black will lose his bishop, with a hopeless position.
25.♗xb8 ♗xb8 26.♘xd4



The material balance has been restored, but Black's king is still stuck in the centre. I could have finished it off faster, but the advantage is so overwhelming it's hard to ruin it, even for me!
26...♕d6 27.♘e6+ ♔e7 28.♘c5+ ♔f7 29.♕c4+ ♔g6 30.g3 h5 31.♕e4+ ♔h6 32.♕xb7 ♕d2 33.♖e7 ♕d1+ 34.♔g2 h4 35.♕d7 ♗d6 36.♘e4 Black resigned.
A good start to the tournament. I wish I could say that about the rest of it. ■

Chess Train 2013



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Zurich

Fabiano

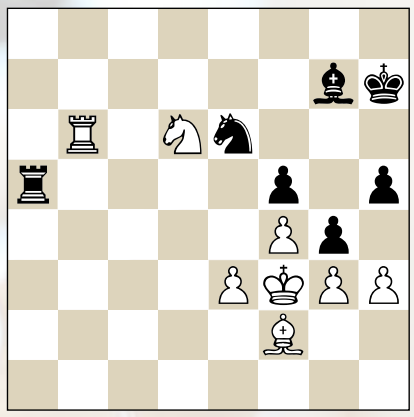
As abruptly as he had dropped out of the Top 10, Fabiano Caruana shot up to seventh place in the world rankings again with probably his finest achievement to date. At the Zurich Chess Challenge the 20-year-old Italian-American ace stood firm and gave no quarter when the pressure mounted. Caruana celebrated his return to good form with wins over World Championship finalists Vishy Anand and Boris Gelfand to claim first place with a one-point margin. As he summed it up himself: 'I maintained a decent level throughout the event and I was never in danger, which is always a nice feeling to have against the top players in the world.'

Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam

It's hard to tell how Fabiano Caruana feels. His emotions rarely come to the surface. At the board he sits with a stony expression. Sometimes he blushes lightly, but he leaves you guessing if he is suddenly worried or if things are going his way. Typical seems to be the way he reacts after he has defeated World Champion Vishy Anand in Round 4. When he arrives at the press conference everyone is delighted that the prevailing fighting spirit has finally resulted in a decisive game. With excited voices commentators Yannick Pelletier and Werner Hug are venting their enthusiasm. Caruana silently takes a seat next to them and sits staring in front of him. When he starts to speak a neutral observer might think that he has just suffered a painful defeat and that the only reason he is here is a stipulation in his contract.

Even after he has decided the tournament in his favour two days later, his face doesn't betray how happy he must be inside. Quietly he walks around, seemingly lost in thought, now and then exchanging some words with his trainer Vladimir Chuchelov and politely listening to people who come up to him to congratulate him.

Perhaps it's this equanimity that serves him so well at the board. That allows him to keep looking for his chances when he is under pressure, and warns him not to get overexcited when his position is promising. Or helps him suppress the nervousness that he felt when he arrived for his last game against Boris Gelfand. As a draw would most likely suffice for first place he wanted to play solidly. But he didn't want to go for a draw, he wanted to at least look for his chances. The position he got was pretty much risk-free, but at the same time he had a strange feeling, as they were playing exactly the same variation he had had against Adams in Baden-Baden. That game he lost, and that loss cost him the tournament. 'But I realized I can't do this twice, lose the same position twice and lose the tournament. The game was pretty one-sided, I was the only one playing for a win. Of course he had chances to draw, but eventually he blundered, the pressure got at him.'

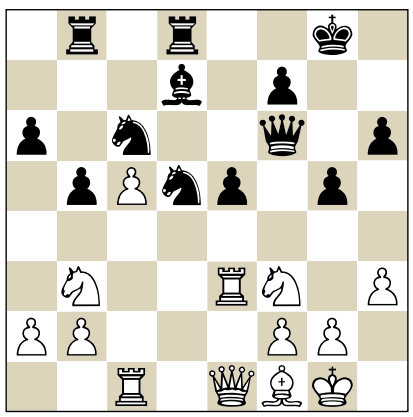


Caruana-Gelfand
position after 49...g4+

After he had lost a pawn in the middlegame, Gelfand managed to reach an endgame with four against three pawns on the kingside. An unpleas-

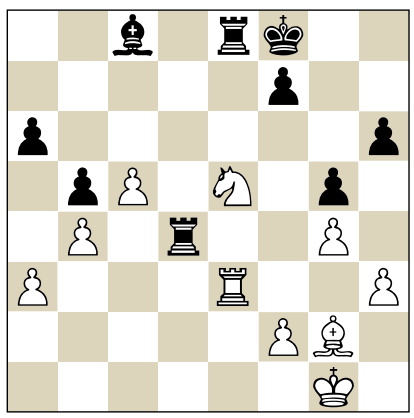
ant ending to play for Black. There are good drawing chances, but there are also pitfalls. **50.hxg4 fxg4+?** The first step into the abyss. He should have taken back with the other pawn. After 50...hxg4+ White retains chances, but Black's hopes of survival would be considerably bigger. **51.♔g2 ♘c5 52.♘b7 ♘xb7 53.♖xb7 ♖a4 54.♖b6 ♖e4 55.♔f1 h4?** Black panics and tries to force matters. **56.gxh4 g3 57.♗g1!** But he had missed this quiet retreat that ends his hopes. **57...♗h6 58.♔g2** Black resigned.

Caruana's win against Anand was a demonstration of cold-blooded defence after the World Champion had made a speculative exchange sacrifice.



Anand-Caruana
position after 28...♘xd5

As even the wildest games up to that point kept ending in draws, Anand may have felt that there was little risk involved in the following exchange sacrifice. With 29.♖e2 he could have maintained a slight edge. **29.♖xe5 ♘xe5 30.♕xe5 ♗e8** White may have some compensation, but Black's position is more resilient than it may look at first sight. **31.♘a5 ♕xe5 32.♘xe5 ♘e7 33.a3 ♖bc8 34.♘d3 ♘c6 35.♘b7 ♖d4 36.♘d6 ♖d8 37.♖e1 ♗d7 38.g4 ♗e6 39.♖e3 ♔f8 40.b4 ♘e7 41.♗g2 ♘c8!** Once the knight is removed from d6, White's position becomes problematic. **42.♘xc8 ♗xc8 43.♘e5 ♖e8**



With the threat of ...f6 in the air, there is no way to see how to avert the invasion of the black rook(s), which will undermine the white pawn chain on the queenside. **44.♖d3 ♖xd3 45.♘xd3 ♖e2** The pawn on a3 will soon fall and the white position collapse, so Anand resigned.

Caruana felt from the start that he was in good shape. On the opening night a blitz tournament was part of the drawing of lots. As we know from the playoff against Magnus Carlsen in Bilbao last year, Caruana is a poor blitz player when he hasn't had the chance to warm up. What he is capable of when he has had time to prepare himself properly became clear in Zurich. With a steady hand he tore the field apart, scoring 5 points from 6 games. Anand went under 0-2, and both Kramnik and Gelfand were defeated 1½-½. In the end Caruana finished a full point ahead of Kramnik with a 3056(!) performance.

> 'There is often a bunch of mistakes, but he scores.'

Following this explosive start the results in the first half of the Zurich Chess Challenge, only draws, left a wrong impression. In reality it was a small miracle that all these games were undecided, because in practically all of them great fights were seen. Looking back Caruana didn't select one of his wins as his best game, but pointed at the two draws against Kramnik as the absolute highlights. 'These were maybe the most exciting games of the tournament. I was pretty happy with both games, even if they weren't perfect, of course.' But then perhaps perfection is not his first aim. As he put it himself: 'Well, my games were not brilliant, but quite reasonable.' As guest-of-honour Garry Kasparov commented: 'Caruana scores. If you look at his games there is often a bunch of mistakes, but he scores. If you look at Magnus Carlsen's games, you see maybe a few small mistakes.'

Most of the games were full of content. In fact, as already suggested, the

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The ties that bind. Ever since their match in 2000, Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik have not been on the best of terms, but the complications in Kramnik's second game against Gelfand were so fascinating that guest-of-honour Kasparov could not stop himself in his enthusiasm from joining the post-mortem. To the right sponsor Oleg Skvortsov and his wife Nataliya.

decisive games were the least interesting, including the one that Anand won thanks to a blunder by Kramnik in the last round to get back to fifty per cent. There were a couple of explanations for the dramatic turns that the games took. One of them, suggested by a leading grandmaster, was that the players were no longer used to the old time-control without increments, which led to panicky situations and remarkable turnarounds. Another was that for Kramnik and Gelfand this event was a training for the Candidates' tournament in London. Kramnik stressed that although his opening choices showed that he didn't want to give away anything, he was nevertheless looking for full-blooded fights, preferably with a crisis around the first time-control. A further show of how serious he is preparing for London could be seen next to his board. Instead of the customary chocolate he now brought a carefully selected energy bar and a kiwi.

Apart from the blitz tournament and the six classical games, Fabiano Caruana also played another game in the opulent Hotel Savoy Bauer en Ville in the heart of Zurich. A game that said a lot about the nature of the tournament and the chess passion of main sponsor Oleg Skvortsov. On the free day, at the end of the afternoon, Skvortsov and Caruana sat down for a friendly game with a time handicap for the grandmaster. It wasn't exactly Skvortsov's first game against a grandmaster. Over the past year he invited a long list of prominent players. A unique list, to which he added Caruana, Anand and Kasparov during his stay in Zurich. His eagerness to play against the best players on the planet sometimes raises eyebrows from people who believe the difference in strength is too big, but you may also wonder: why not? Why wouldn't a passionate chess lover treat himself to a unique experience if he can afford it, when other millionaires have fun inviting Beyoncé or Madonna for private concerts? In fact, why aren't there more rich chess fans that play against grandmasters just for the fun of it? A good reason is one offered by Skvortsov himself: because most of them are not strong enough. His own strength, according to some of the players he met, he says is between 2300 and 2400. Others we spoke to guessed 'between 2200 and 2300' or 'between 2100 and 2200'. 'I don't say that I am a very strong player, but I am improving, I'm already better than one year ago.' Probably it's hard to say. To find out he should play against opponents in those rating regions, but given his busy schedule he finds that a waste of time. He doesn't want to compete in tournaments, he only wants to improve his chess and to achieve that he prefers to play the best.

The idea was born last year when Skvortsov, who used to be an avid player in his younger years, organized a match between Aronian and Kramnik in Zurich (see New In Chess 2012/4). Before that match he asked

NEW IN CHESS

Who wouldn't like to play against the World Champion? On the free day Oleg Skvortsov invited Vishy Anand to a game in the Festsaal of the Savoy Bauer Hotel (Anand won).

Kramnik for a friendly game. 'Suddenly I thought of playing serious chess again. I don't like blitz games, that's mostly mechanically moving pieces, and classical games would take too much time and effort. So I suggested one hour for me and 30 minutes for the grandmaster. Or 40 against 20. The minimum I played was 30 against 15 minutes, but usually I prefer one hour or 45 minutes.'

His next opponent was none other than Magnus Carlsen, but the encounter was not what he had hoped it to be. At the end of February 2012 he flew to Oslo, but Carlsen only wanted to play a couple of blitz games. 'I said that I was not going to play blitz and we found a compromise. We played two rapid games with 15 minutes to him and 20 minutes to me. And one blitz game with 5 minutes each. So, actually I didn't get any advantage and all these three games I lost.'

He wants to learn, but he is also interested in the personalities of his opponents. 'You want to find out how they think. To get impressions about their soul, their feelings. It's not only about chess, it's some kind of chat on the chessboard.' The only thing he asks from his opponents is that they play with their full power. He doesn't want any favours. 'When I make a draw, it's a draw, and not a draw they gave me.' But the atmosphere is friendly. Sometimes they talk about a move that has been played. And depending on who is the opponent they may add some extra time for both if the game is very interesting. Graciousness is important to him. He doesn't want to be reminded of a game that he lost on time to Hikaru Nakamura after the American turned down a draw offer. It's not worth talking about and only after I insist he indirectly gives his opinion: 'I said it was a draw, he said, "I am slightly better." That's his right, that's his choice.'

Other GMs that he played include Aronian, Gelfand, Kortchnoi, Pelletier, Nepomniachtchi, Giri and Karjakin. Some, he says, play out of friendship, others for 'reasonable' fees. 'Last year I played around 70 games with different time-controls against top grandmasters and from these 70 I made four or five draws and two games I won.' For the moment he wants to keep it a secret who he beat. 'They made an inaccuracy or a mistake in the opening because they didn't prepare. But now they prepare. Even Kasparov prepared, because he knew some openings I played.'

> 'Karjakin still needs what Spassky called "the killer's instinct" to beat Carlsen.'

At first he trained with Sergey Shipov, but because Shipov didn't have enough time he switched to Vladimir Barsky, whom he tries to meet every week for a session of 3-4 hours. Barsky calls the openings he plays 'not the best, but interesting'. Skvortsov finds his ideas in lost moments, when he takes a brief break from work. First he checks them himself, next he tests them with the computer. 'I don't want to play well-known openings that people learn by heart. That is not chess. People have good memory, they play 25 moves and this position has already occurred a thousand times. There is nothing there to create for you. I prefer to play risky games. For example, against the Sicilian I play 2.f4 or 2.b3. I can use some of my ideas and my opponents have to think more. Playing the main lines makes no sense as they know these better. I still have some five new ideas in my pocket, like jokers. I hope to use them somewhere this year.'

His most frequent opponent has been Sergey Karjakin, who even wrote an article on their encounters in '64'. They meet every month and he hopes the young Russian will one day play for the highest title. 'He is very talented, but he is still a bit shy. He is not from Moscow, but he has now found

his place in this crazy world. He still needs what Spassky called "the killer's instinct" to beat Carlsen.'

His other friends are Aronian, Gelfand and Kramnik, whom he admires both as players and personalities. He hopes that one of them will win the Candidates' tournament. From the players that are no longer active there are a number that he likes. 'From the old days I can mention Paul Morphy, a genius, a mystery. In Paris I went to all the places where he stayed and played during his visit to Europe. Just like I followed in the footsteps of my favourite writer, Ernest Hemingway, who wrote *A Moveable Feast* in Paris.' From the more recent giants he names Bent Larsen, Garry Kasparov and Paul Keres. 'Larsen, because he was a very creative player, he was called the strategic romantic. Kasparov, because he dedicated his whole life to chess and enriched the game with so many ideas. Paul Keres, because probably I regret that he always came second and because he was a gentleman.'

Keres could be an example for many chess players, he believes. As might be expected he is inundated by requests from players, managers and trainers who have ideas how he could spend his money. The silliest request came from a player who explained to him that he should support him financially just because of who he (the player) was. As a reaction I quote David Norwood, who once said in an interview: 'Chess players think the world owes them a living, and it doesn't.' Skvortsov nods: 'In fact I didn't want to say anything further on this, but I fully subscribe to these words.'

He prefers to speak about positive things. Such as the plans that he and his friends will make known after the summer. 'Classical chess is not dead, we don't need to bury it, but we have to make some adjustments.' What adjustments they are thinking of, he doesn't want to say now, but he can reveal that to his mind 6 players is probably the perfect number for a next event.

NOTES BY
Anish Giri

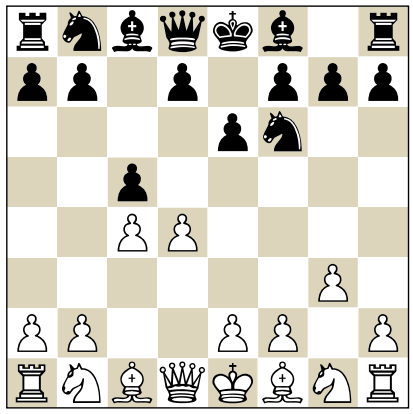
BI 9.15 – A62
Fabiano Caruana
Vladimir Kramnik
Zurich 2013 (3)

The good thing about top chess is that it's a win-win sport. Either the games are good... or they are spectacular!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.g3

Asking for it.

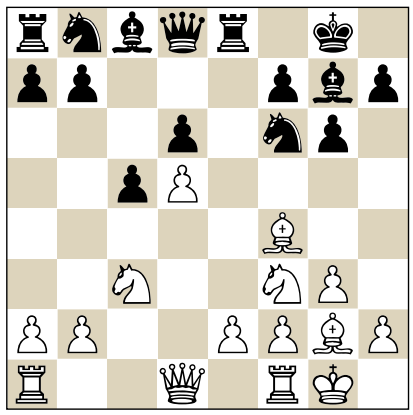
3...c5!



When Vladimir Borisovich is inspired you don't have to ask him twice to enter a sharp position.

4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♘c3 g6 7.♗g2 ♗g7 8.♘f3 0-0 9.0-0 ♖e8 10.♗f4

The modern main line of the g3 Benoni, since the good old ♘d2-c4 manoeuvre got refuted a couple of years back.



10...a6

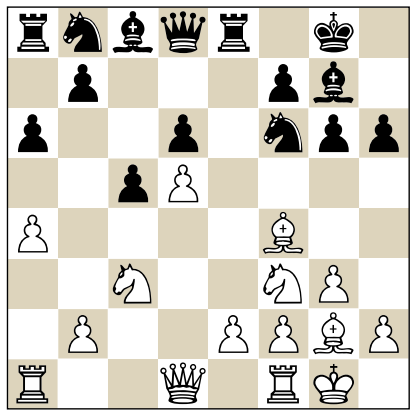
Kramnik chooses a rare way to combat the bishop sortie.

10...♘a6 has been played by the modern guru of the Benoni, Vugar Gashimov. Black has lots of counterplay here, for example 11.♖e1 ♗g4 12.♕b3 b5! and Black had the initiative in Grischuk-Gashimov, Amber rapid, Nice 2010.

Recently, 10...♘e4 with the following interesting idea has been played a couple of times: 11.♘xe4 ♖xe4 12.♘d2 ♖xf4 13.gxf4 ♗xb2 14.♖b1 ♗g7.

11.a4 h6

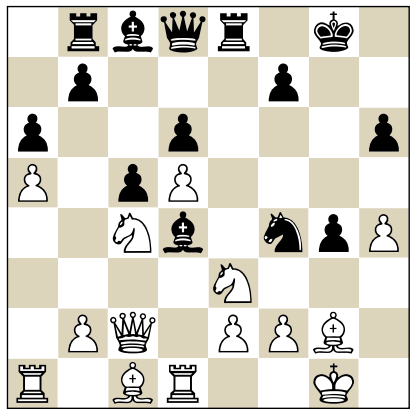
I really used to dislike this ...h6/...g5 idea, but once I saw Nisipeanu sacrifice half the chess board somewhere in Rijeka in 2010, I got a bit more tolerant.



12.♖e1?!

Pretty useless in this particular position. 12.♕c1 first looks more logical, when White saves up on the move ♖e1: 12...g5 13.♗d2 ♗f5 14.h4 g4 15.♘e1 ♔h7 16.♘c2.

The game I referred to went 12.a5 g5 13.♗c1 ♘bd7 14.h4 g4 15.♘d2 ♘e5 16.♕c2 ♖b8 17.♘d1 ♘g6 18.♘c4 ♘h5 19.♘de3 ♗d4 20.♖d1 ♘xh4 21.gxh4 ♘f4



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

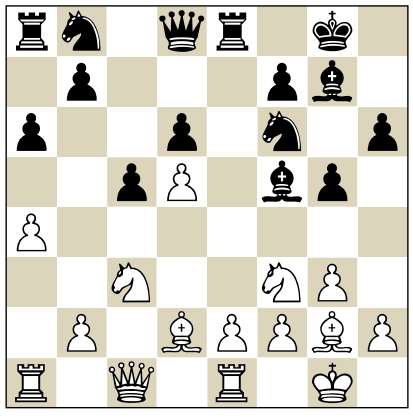
22.♖xd4 cxd4 23.♘f5 d3 24.♘xh6+ ♔f8 25.exd3 ♖e1+ 26.♗f1 ♘h3+

27.♔g2 ♕xh4 28.♘xd6 ♘f4+ 29.♗xf4 ♕h3+ 0-1, Medvegy-Nisipeanu, Rijeka 2010.

12...♗f5

12...g5 was another way, but after 13.♗d2 ♘bd7 14.♕c2 White gets control of the important b1-h7-diagonal.

13.♕c1 g5 14.♗d2



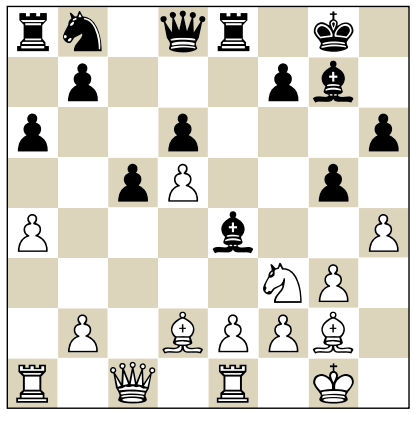
14...♘bd7

Besides this natural move, Black also had a sharper alternative.

14...♘e4!? is very forcing, interesting and dangerous: 15.♘xe4 ♗xe4 16.h4!

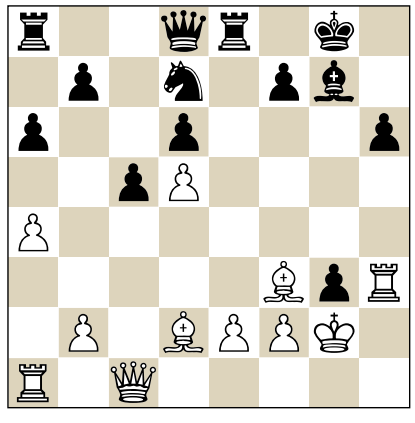
Zurich 2013 — **cat. XXI**

					1	2	3	4		TPR
1	**Fabiano Caruana**	IGM	ITA	2757	* *	½ 1	½ ½	½ 1	4	2897
2	**Vishy Anand**	IGM	IND	2780	½ 0	* *	½ 1	½ ½	3	2769
3	**Vladimir Kramnik**	IGM	RUS	2810	½ ½	½ 0	* *	½ ½	2½	2701
4	**Boris Gelfand**	IGM	ISR	2740	½ 0	½ ½	½ ½	* *	2½	2724

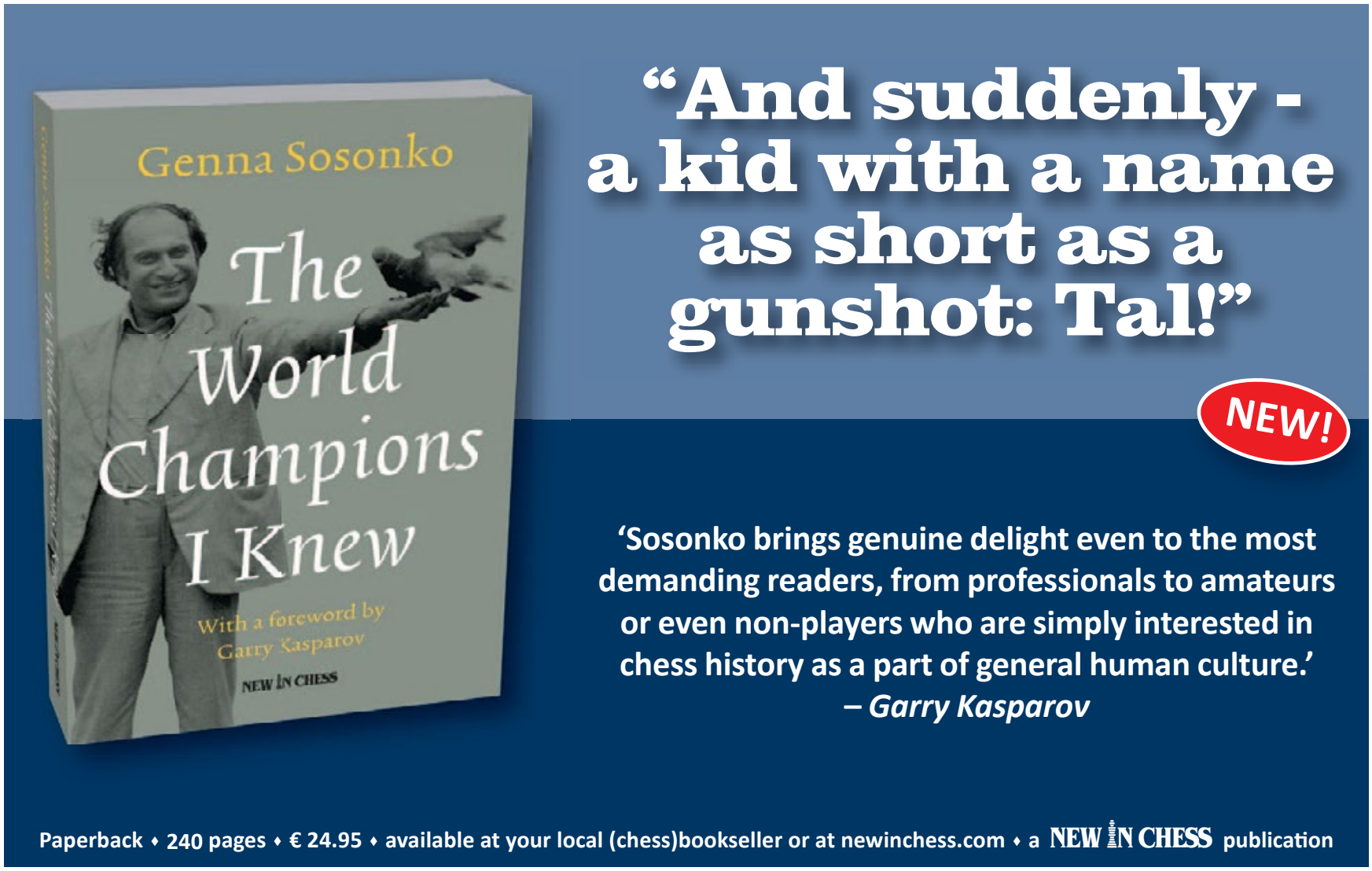


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

16...♗xf3 (you won't believe it, but my engine is saying 16...f6 is an option too...) 17.♗xf3 (17.exf3 ♖xe1+ 18.♗xe1 gxh4) 17...gxh4, and now it's time for White to be clever: 18.♔g2! hxg3 19.♖h1 ♘d7 20.♖h3! (after 20.♗xh6 Black is in time: 20...♕f6 21.♖h3 ♔f8 22.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 23.♖xg3+ ♔f8 24.a5 ♔e7, and soon he'll take over)



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM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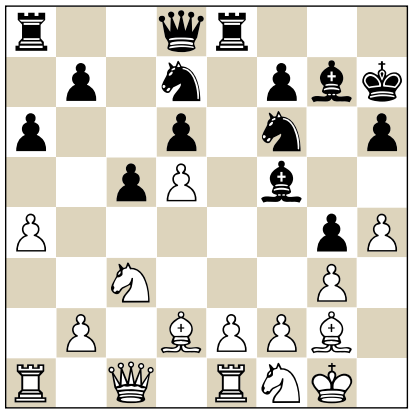
20...♘f8! 21.♗xh6 ♕f6 22.♖xg3 ♘g6, and it seems that Black has managed to consolidate, so perhaps 14...♘e4 was a good option.

15.h4 g4 16.♘h2 ♔h7 17.♘f1



17...♘e5?!

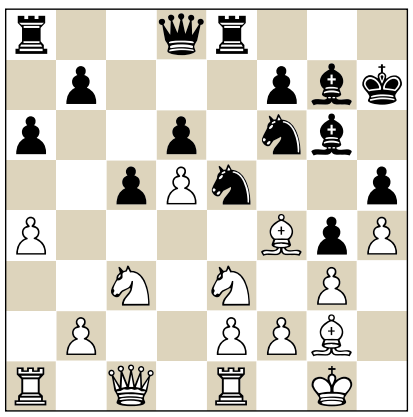
This is all very logical, but now White seems to be in time to consolidate the situation on the kingside.

Instead, Black should have been more flexible: 17...♗g6!, when after 18.♗f4 (on 18.a5 Black has 18...♘h5 19.♘e3 ♗d4) 18...♕c7 19.♘e3 the d7-knight can choose another route: 19...c4! followed by ...♘c5. Black is doing extremely well here.

18.♗f4 ♗g6

The move I like is 18...♘h5, but unfortunately here Black falls one tempo short: 19.♘e3 ♗d7 20.♗xe5! ♗xe5 21.♘c4 and it doesn't look like much fun anymore.

19.♘e3 h5



I don't know if it's just me, but it feels that somehow Black didn't manage to get the desirable counterplay. If you remember, Nisipeanu had his knight flying around...

20.a5 ♕c7

It's not clear if this move is needed here at all, but then again it's not really about tempi here. Black is trying to prepare ...b5, but I believe his position is pretty suspect, especially with all the weaknesses created around his king. Therefore, 20...♖b8 might have been a better idea.

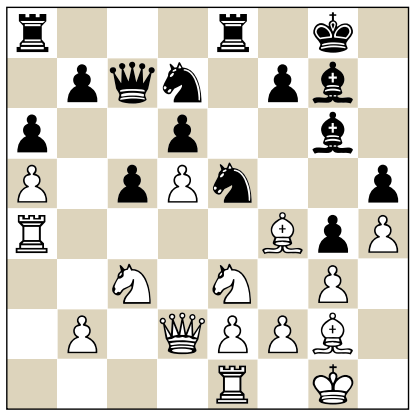
21.♖a4

21.♘a4 looks strong at first sight, but Black is alive here: 21...♕xa5! 22.♗xe5 dxe5 23.♕xc5 ♕xc5 24.♘xc5. This looks quite bad, but in fact Black has more than enough counterplay after 24...e4!.

21...♔g8

Preparing ...♘fd7 and trying to avoid ♗e4.

22.♕d2 ♘fd7



23.♖a2

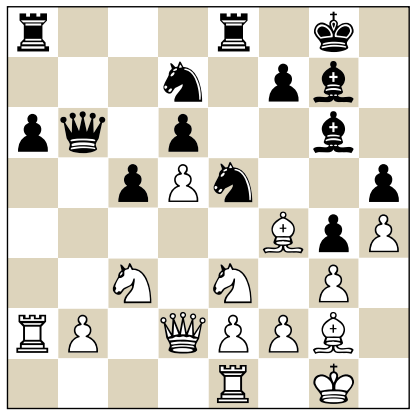
A healthy decision, to anticipate the coming ...b5 and to avoid unnecessary complications.

23.♗e4 is possible, but after 23...b5 24.axb6 ♘xb6 25.♗xg6 ♘xa4 (25...♘xg6 26.♖e4) 26.♗xh5 ♘xc3 27.bxc3 a5 it's a mess, although it's still a long way for the little soldier.

On the other hand, 23.♖ea1 would be exactly what Black needs: 23...b5 24.axb6 ♘xb6 25.♖xa6 ♖xa6 26.♖xa6 ♕b7!, and the well-known Benoni stuff will start after 27.♖a2 ♘bc4.

23...b5 24.axb6 ♕xb6?!

24...♘xb6 would probably be met by 25.b3!, stopping ...♘c4.



25.♗e4?

Blundering into a nice, though pretty obvious trick.

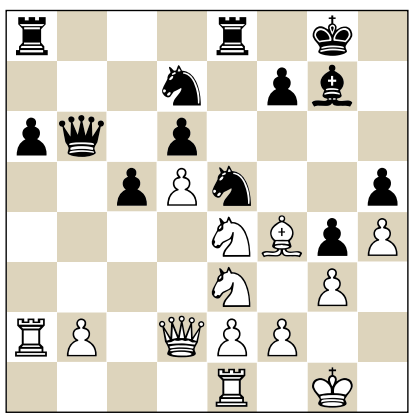
Best was 25.♖ea1!, strengthening the ♗e4 idea. Black simply has no defence against this move and as hard as it is to believe, he is suddenly on the verge of losing: 25...a5. OK, this is useless, but what else?! Now you can see the point of 25.♖ea1 in the following variation: 26.♗e4 ♗xe4 27.♘xe4 ♘g6

NEW IN CHESS

Fabiano Caruana found the two games he played against Vladimir Kramnik 'maybe the most exciting games of the tournament.'

28.♘c4, and after 28...♕b3 the rook is defended and White can just collect the d6-pawn.

25...♗xe4 26.♘xe4

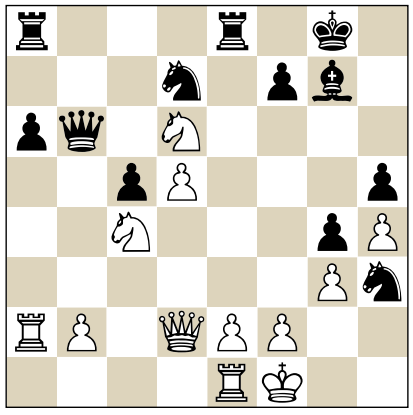


26...♘g6! A new phase starts. The position has gotten absolutely wild, with both sides having their trumps.

27.♘xd6 ♘xf4 28.♘ec4 ♘h3+

This is not the best square for the knight, but I guess it must be happy to simply be alive.

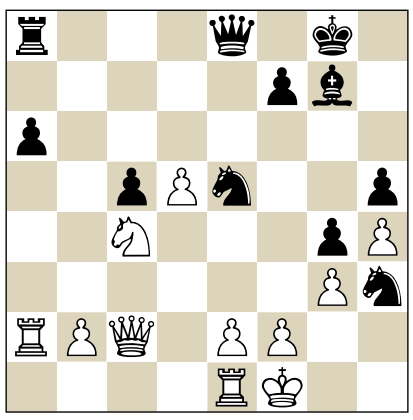
29.♔f1



29...♕b8

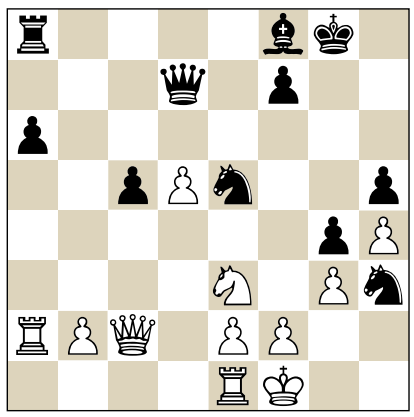
It was also interesting to play 29...♕c7 and to recapture on e8 with the rook, but Black simply has too many options and it's hard to say which one is better and why.

30.♘xe8 ♕xe8 31.♕c2 ♘e5



32.♘d6 A bit of an unnecessary pirouette. Better was the immediate 32.♘e3!.

32...♕d7 33.♘f5 ♗f8 34.♘e3

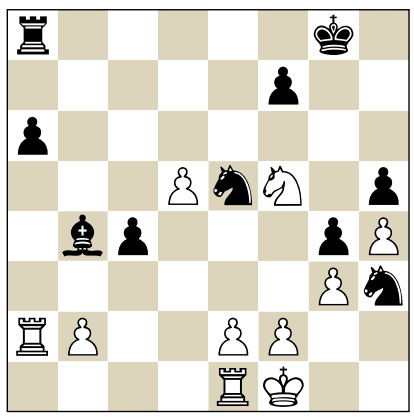


34...c4!?

Kramnik senses that the game has taken a nice turn for the better after 26...♘g6! and sees no need to go for a draw, which he could have forced with 34...♗h6 35.♘f5 ♗f8.

35.♕f5 ♕xf5 36.♘xf5 ♗b4

36...♗c5 is also a nice square for the bishop. Normally speaking the game would fizzle out to a draw after 37.f4 gxf3 38.exf3 ♘xf3 39.♖ea1.



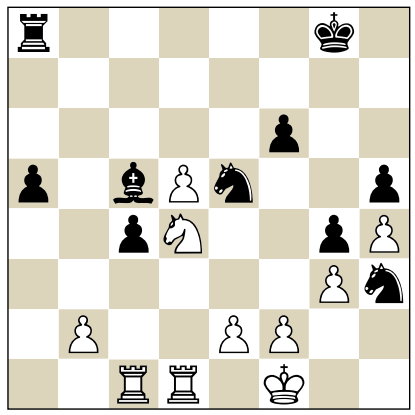
37.♖d1 a5 38.♖aa1

Logical, but in fact the rook could also be quite useful where it is.

After 38.d6!? a possible line would be 38...f6 39.f4 gxf3 40.exf3 ♘d3 41.♔g2 ♘hf2 42.♖f1 ♗c5 (42...♔f7 43.♖xf2 ♘xf2 44.♔xf2 ♔e6 should be a draw, too) 43.d7, and the miserable-looking rook on a2 is going to come back into the game: 43...♖d8 44.♖xa5 ♖xd7 45.♖xc5 ♘xc5 46.♖xf2 ♘d3, and it seems Black is holding his ground after 47.♖e2 ♖b7.

38...f6 39.♖ac1?! ♗c5 40.♘d4?!

Better looked 40.e3. Somehow with his last few moves Fabiano has misplaced his pieces a bit. Still, it's hard for Black to prove anything.



40...♔f7?! Played by hand.

40...♗b6!, preparing ...♖d8, was very strong and cold-blooded.

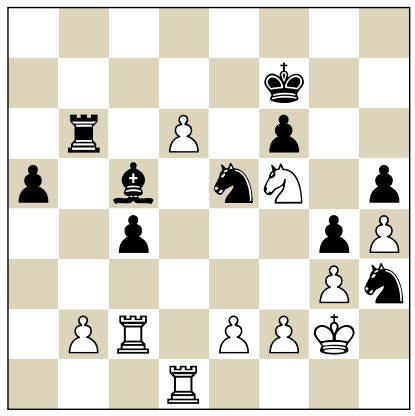
41.♔g2 ♖b8 42.♖c2 Now Black has countless options to proceed, but it seems that the position is balanced.

42...♖b4 An alternative was 42...c3!? 43.♖xc3 (43.bxc3 a4) 43...♗xd4 44.♖xd4 ♖xb2 45.d6 ♖xe2 46.d7 ♖xf2+ 47.♔h1 with a draw.

43.d6 Finally, Fabiano decides on using his trump, the passed d-pawn.

43...♖b6 43...♗xd6 was wrong: 44.f4! ♘g6 45.♘c6!.

44.♘f5

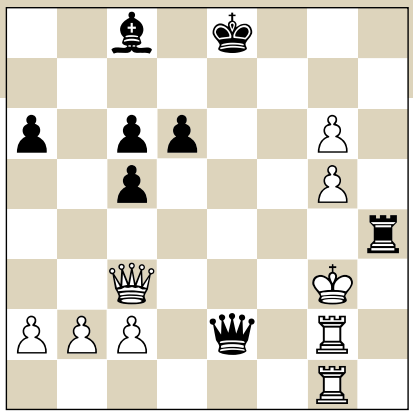


44...♗xf2 Now the game simplifies to a drawn position.

44...♘d7 would have kept the tension, but it's not really playing for a win: 45.♖xc4 ♖xb2 46.♖e4, and White has a perpetual with 46...♔g6 47.♘e7+ ♔f7 48.♘f5.

45.d7 ♘xd7 46.♖xd7+ ♔e6 47.♖h7 ♔xf5 48.♖xh5+ ♔g6 49.♖xa5 ♖b4 50.♖a6 ♗d4 51.♖c6 ♗xb2 52.♖6xc4 ♖xc4 53.♖xc4 ♔h5 Draw, as neither side can make any progress. A thriller! ■

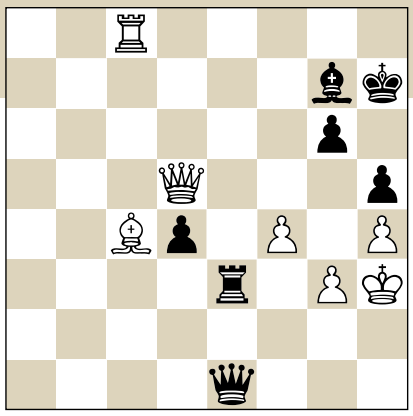
Beware: Brilliancy! Solutions of page 77



1. Stoltz-Pilnik

Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952

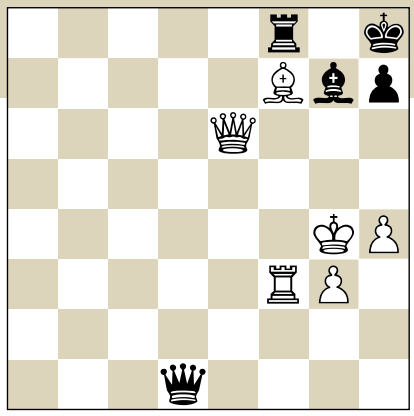
1...♖h3+ 2.♔f4 ♖f3+! 3.♕xf3 ♕e5 Mate!



2. Bosboom-Barbero

Wijk aan Zee 1991

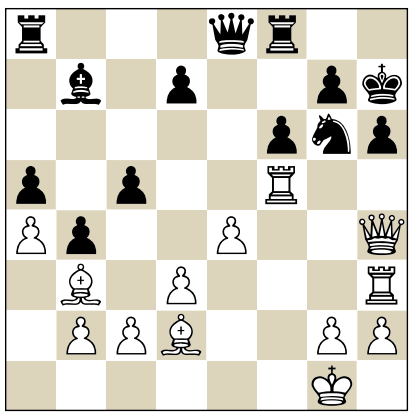
1.♖h8+!! ♗xh8 2.♕g8+ ♔h6 3.♕xh8 Mate!



3. Navara-Hansen

Bled Olympiad 2002

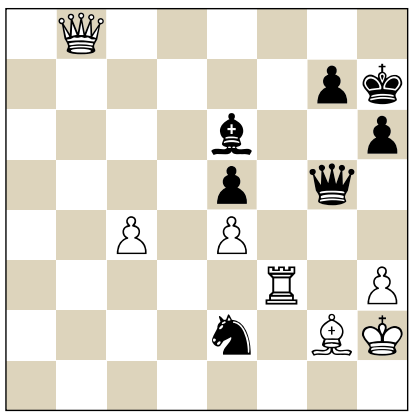
Black could force a study-like mate by **1... h5+! 2.♔f4** 2.♗xh5 ♕xf3+. **2...♖xf7+! 3.♕xf7 ♕d4+ 4.♔f5 ♕g4** Mate!



4. Sadvakasov-Shukurova

Baku President's Cup 2006

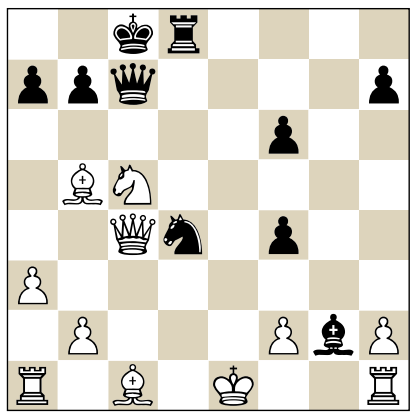
1.♕xh6+!! gxh6 2.♖xh6+ ♔g7 3.♖h7+! ♔xh7 4.♖h5+ ♔g7 5.♗h6+ ♔h7 6.♗xf8 Mate!



5. Miezis-Bischoff

Germany Bundesliga 2010/11

1...♗xh3!! 2.♖xh3 2.♔xh3 ♕h5 mate; 2.♗xh3 ♕g1 mate. **2...♕f4+ 3.♔h1 ♕c1+ 4.♗f1 ♕xf1+ 5.♔h2 ♕g1** Mate!



6. Svidler-Vitiugov

Moscow Russian Championship 2012

1...♕a5+!! 2.b4 ♕xb5! 3.♕xb5 ♘c2+ 4.♔e2 f3 Mate!

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Jan Timman

Carlsen's all-round understanding

Carlsen's brilliant success in Wijk aan Zee elicited much praise, except for one discordant voice. On the Russian website *Chess-News*, Evgeny Sveshnikov gave a rather unfavourable account of the Norwegian phenomenon:

'Carlsen's weakness is above all the opening. At this stage of the game he is not a strong player (...) The way the new generation plays the opening... I would say they are neither Polugaevsky nor Kasparov. They lack success in openings. They just play chess, that's why their chances to fight for the title are small (...) At the moment Carlsen shows good practical play, but if Kasparov won't coach him with his preparation methods, I would say that Magnus's future doesn't look promising.'

And he continues in this vein. I have quoted from his argument at some length, because it is so hilarious. Carlsen has won so many tournaments by now that it is sheer coincidence that he is not World Champion yet. This is a unique situation in chess history. Even Fischer's pre-1972 successes pale into insignificance compared to Carlsen's tournament wins.

The comparison with Polugaevsky, who is given as a shining example, is equally amusing, as it conjures up a picture of the nervous Russian with his impressive bird's head. He was certainly prepared to the gills in a number of openings. Many of his finds in the Polugaevsky Variation have held up under the critical eye of the computer, but it was precisely because of this that he became uncertain when a position arose that he had not examined at home. In such a case all kinds of things could go wrong.

It is wrong to say that Carlsen is weak in the opening. Kortchnoi once said that when you study openings, you should always make sure that you understand the resulting middlegame. It seems to me that Carlsen uses this principle as his guideline. For him, the opening is subservient to the middlegame. He avoids sharp variations in which every move is critical and which often peter out in bloodless draws. Carlsen wants to avoid an early crisis in the game, relying on his unequalled skill in making seemingly harmless middlegame positions work to his advantage.

In the previous issue, Jon Speelman wrote about Carlsen's endgames in London. What struck me in Wijk aan Zee was the way the young Norwegian handled the middlegame. I noticed his all-round understanding of the positions. He had many different positions, and in all of them he managed to find his way unerringly, both strategically and tactically.

Carlsen handles his time very economically. Like Aronian, he plays very fast when the position has no secrets for him, but when he is less familiar with it, he will spend more time, although never to the extent that he finds himself in time-trouble, not even in the very last stage of the game.

It is easier to follow a tournament when you're not playing yourself. I am in the habit of following the games live then, with a glass of good red wine within reach. But when you are there, you can only follow the games in bits and pieces. Then I have to retire to my study to find the line and logic in the various games: after a while the missing pieces of the jigsaw fall into place.

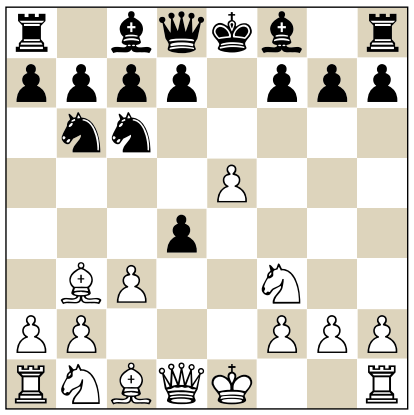
In Wijk aan Zee, Carlsen scored a monster result as White: 6½ out of 7. With black he scored only a single win.

KP 8.6 – C44
Hou Yifan
Magnus Carlsen
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (9)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.c3

Hou Yifan fights Carlsen with his own weapons. Some rounds earlier, Carlsen himself had played the Ponziani against Harikrishna.

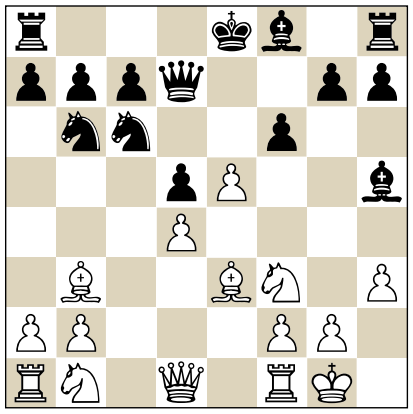
3...♘f6 4.d4 exd4 5.e5 ♘d5 6.♗c4 ♘b6 7.♗b3



The interesting thing is that this position also occurs in the Sicilian, but then with the pawn on e7 instead of on c7, of course. Another remarkable thing is that this position had not yet occurred in grandmaster practice.

7...d5 This is also a tried and tested way to balance the centre in the Sicilian. In this situation, Black already has comfortable play.

8.cxd4 ♗g4 9.♗e3 f6 10.0-0 ♕d7 11.h3 ♗h5



A warm welcome. As Magnus Carlsen receives the daily prize of the public for his win against Karjakin in the previous round, Hou Yifan joins the applause of the spectators.

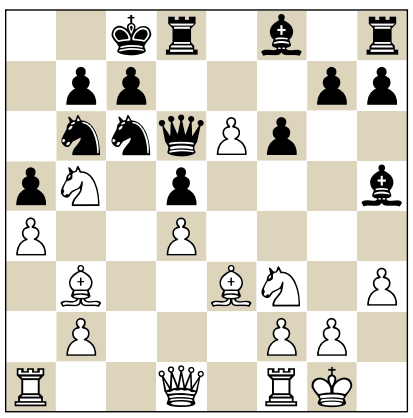
12.e6

What Sveshnikov had to say about Carlsen applies much more to Hou Yifan, who is very talented but sometimes fails to find the correct path in the opening. And then I am not even talking about opening preparation, but about a general attitude during the game. If Carlsen had been White, he would have acknowledged that he had failed to get any advantage out of the opening; he would probably have continued 12.♘bd2, after which White is not noticeably worse. Hou Yifan still tries to make something out of it by sacrificing a pawn. This may be courageous in itself, but in this case it only yields White a short-lived initiative by way of compensation. When that has run its course, Black will be a solid pawn up.

12...♕d6

Black is playing around the pawn. After 12...♕xe6 13.♘g5! White would recapture the pawn with decent play.

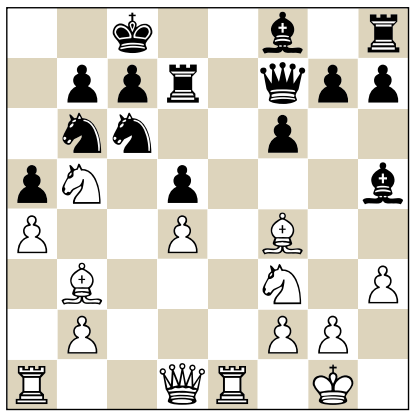
13.♘c3 0-0-0 14.a4 a5 15.♘b5



15...♕xe6 16.♗f4 ♖d7

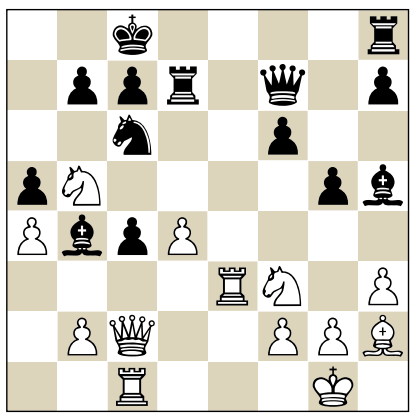
Black's last defensive move. He is ready to take over the initiative.

17.♖e1 ♕f7



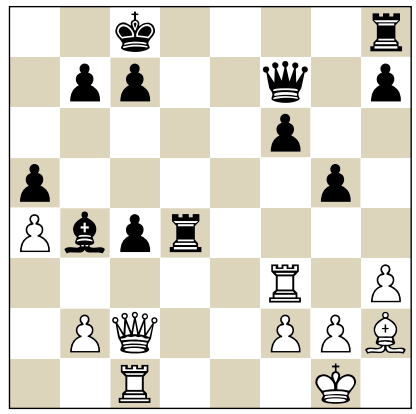
18.♖c1 A mechanical move. Better was 18.♗c2, intending to aim for an exchange of the light-squared bishops. White can then cover the a-pawn with b2-b3 at a later stage, after which Black will find it hard to make his superiority count.

18...♗b4 19.♖e3 g5 Black is clearly calling the shots. **20.♗h2 ♘c4 21.♗xc4 dxc4 22.♕c2**

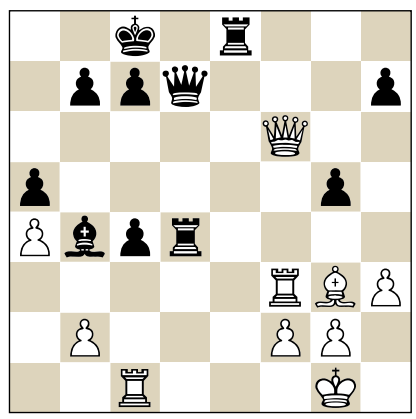


22...♗xf3 The computer regards 22...♖hd8 and 22...♗g6 as even stronger here, but Carlsen wants to hang on to his outpost on c4, trusting that his superiority on the queenside suffices for the win.

23.♖xf3 ♘xd4 24.♘xd4 ♖xd4



25.♗e5 ♖d2 26.♕f5+ ♕d7 27.♕xf6 ♖e8 28.♗g3 ♖d4



29.♖f1 After this passive move White's position becomes pretty hopeless, but even after 29.♖f5 g4, Black's advantage should be sufficient for the win.

29...g4 30.hxg4 ♖xg4 31.♖f4 h5 32.♖xg4 hxg4 33.♖c1

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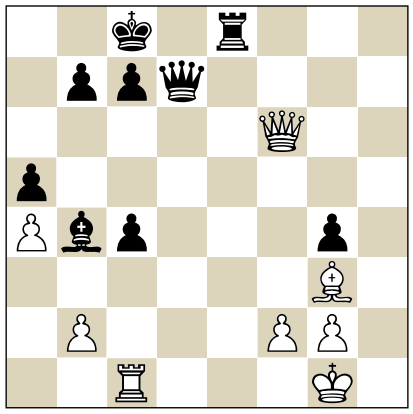
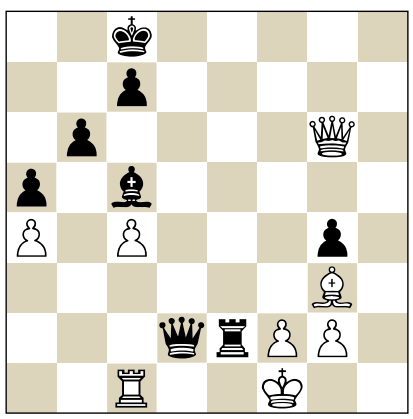
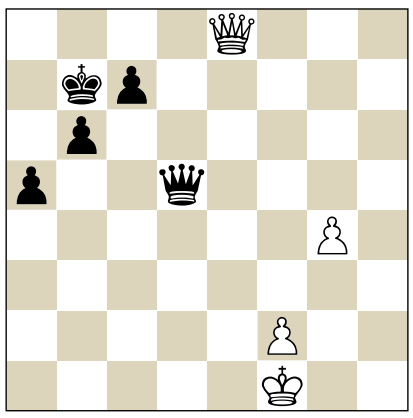


33...c3! Good technique. Black gives up his outpost in order to weaken the white queenside even further.
34.bxc3 ♗c5 35.♕g5 b6 36.c4 ♖e4 37.♕g6 ♖e2 38.♔f1 ♕d2



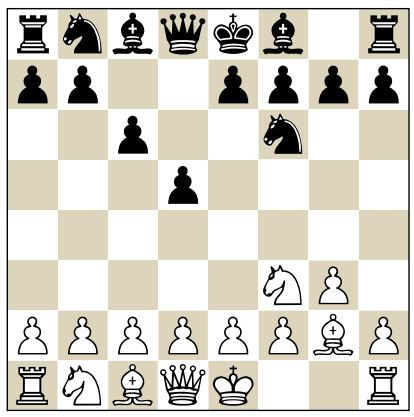
Based on sharp calculation. Black will end up with three powerful passed pawns on the queenside, whereas the white majority on the kingside will not play any part in the proceedings.
39.♕xg4+ ♔b8 40.♕xe2 ♕xc1+ 41.♕e1 ♕xc4+ 42.♕e2 ♕xa4 43.♗e5 ♗d4 44.♗xd4 ♕xd4 45.g4 ♕d5 46.♕e8+ ♔b7



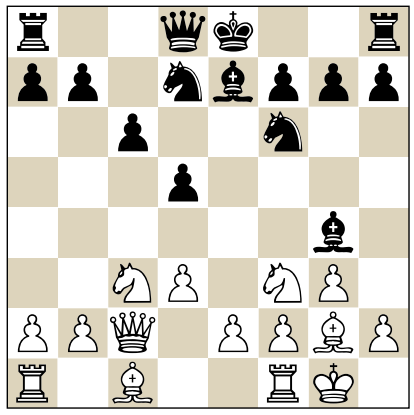
47.♕a4 b5 48.♕xa5 ♕d1+ 49.♕e1 ♕xg4 50.♕e5 ♕c4+ 51.♔g2 ♕c6+ 52.♔f1 b4 53.f4 b3 54.f5 ♔a6 55.♕a1+ ♔b6 56.♕h8 ♕c1+ 57.♔g2 ♕c2+ 58.♔h1 b2 59.♕b8+ ♔a5 60.♕a7+ ♔b4 61.♕b7+ ♔a3 62.♕f3+ ♕b3 63.♕a8+ ♕a4 64.♕f3+ ♔a2 65.♕d5+ ♔a1 66.♕e5 c5
White resigned.

With Carlsen's games as White one is spoilt for choice. He invariably manages to take control of the game with simple means, the only exception being the walk-over against Nakamura. Carlsen's most thought-provoking game was probably his hard-fought win against Karjakin, a game that is worthwhile in all its stages.

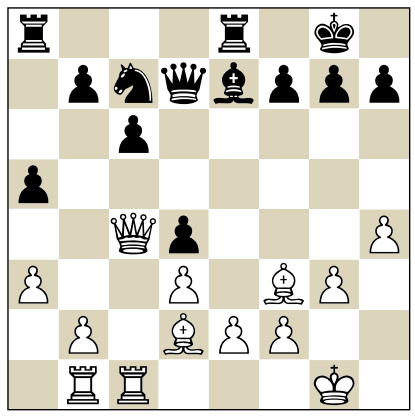
RE 5.11 – A07
Magnus Carlsen
Sergey Karjakin
Wijk aan Zee 2013 (8)
1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 d5 3.♗g2 c6



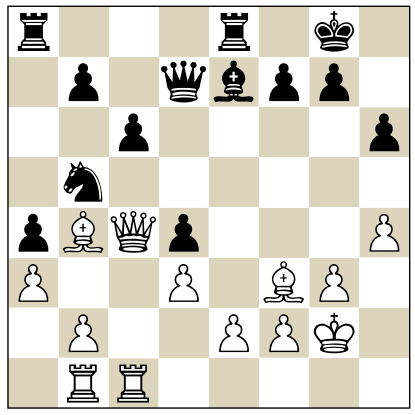
4.0-0 As usual, Carlsen avoids the sharp lines. The text leads to the normal Réti positions, whereas the pawn sac 4.c4 is critical. **4...♗g4 5.c4 e6 6.d3 ♘bd7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♕c2**
This set-up was often used by the Uzbek grandmaster Valery Loginov. White is aiming for the advance e2-e4.
8...♗e7 9.♘c3



9...♗xf3 A remarkable decision. Black voluntarily gives up the bishop pair in order to have more of a say in the centre. This leads to a playable position, albeit with the drawback that Black will hardly manage to get active. As soon as the position is opened, the white bishop pair will become strong.
10.♗xf3 d4 11.♘e4 0-0 12.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 13.♗d2 a5
Preventing the advance of the b-pawn.
14.a3 ♘d5 15.♖ab1 ♕d7 16.♖fc1 ♖fe8 17.♕c4 ♘c7 18.h4



Carlsen is playing on both wings, well aware that he will have no breaking moves for a while and will only be able to reinforce his position piecemeal.
18...a4
Fixing the queenside structure even more. But Black's relinquishment of square b4 gives White a fresh plan.
19.♗b4
White is prepared to give up his bishop pair in exchange for squares on the queenside. After 19...♗xb4 20.♕xb4, White might continue with 21.♖c5 in order to exert pressure on the black position. There wouldn't be much of a threat, but it is understandable that Karjakin wants to avoid this.
19...♘b5 20.♔g2 h6



A useful little move. Black is considering the advance ...g7-g5 at some stage.

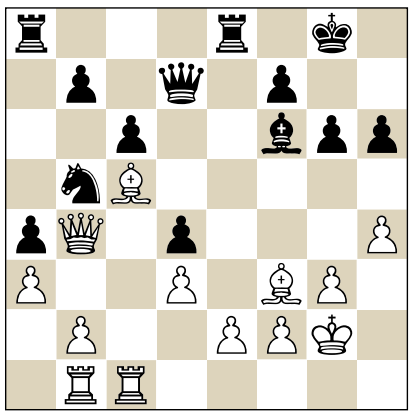
21.♗c5 White is pushing.

21...g6

In this situation, Black could safely have swapped the bishops. After 21...♗xc5 22.♕xc5 ♕d6 White would find it hard to prevent the queens from being swapped, and in the resulting endgame Black would have nothing to fear. The knight is strong and White does not have any good breaking moves.

22.♕b4 ♗f6

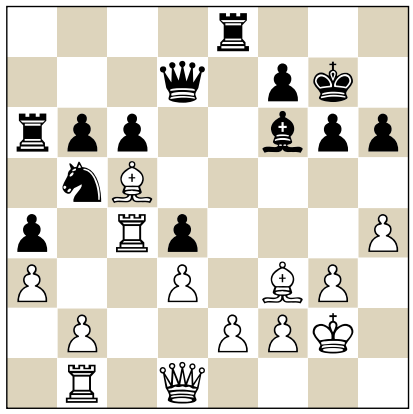
This puts paid to the bishop swap for the moment. The black bishop will end up very bad, but there was no way this could have been foreseen here.



23.♕d2

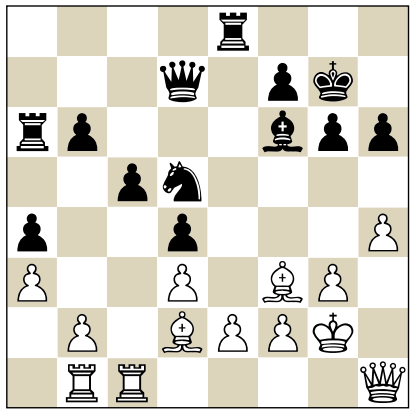
The start of an interesting regrouping. White is going to transfer his queen to the kingside. From the corner square h1, the queen will exert more pressure on the position than from the queenside.

23...♔g7 24.♖c4 ♖a6 25.♕d1 b6



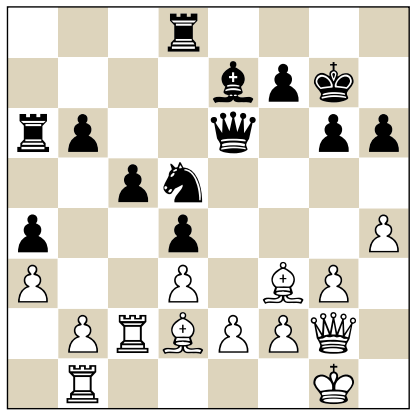
Black decides to chase the queen's bishop back. This will yield him some more space, but has the drawback that the white king's bishop gains considerable elbow room.

26.♗b4 c5 27.♗d2 ♘c7 28.♖cc1 ♘d5 29.♕h1



The kingside has been reached.

29...♗e7 30.♔g1 ♖d8 31.♖c2 ♕e6 32.♕g2



32...♖a7 An understandable move. Black deploys the rook. Yet 32...g5 would probably have been stronger, since Black now threatens to forcibly exchange the white king's bishop with 33...g4, which would be very advantageous for him. White does not seem to have anything better than 33.hxg5 hxg5 34.g4, after which Black can prepare the knight jump to f4 with 34...♕e5, and White has no chance to retain any advantage.

33.♖e1 Carlsen is alert. Now White will be able to meet 33...g5 with 34.hxg5 hxg5 35.e3, with a pleasant position for White.

33...♖ad7 34.♔h2

Another purposeful move. White is going to take his queen to h3.

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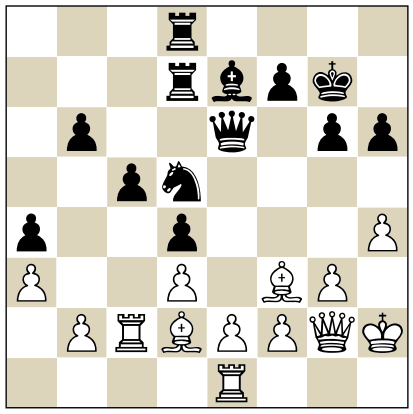
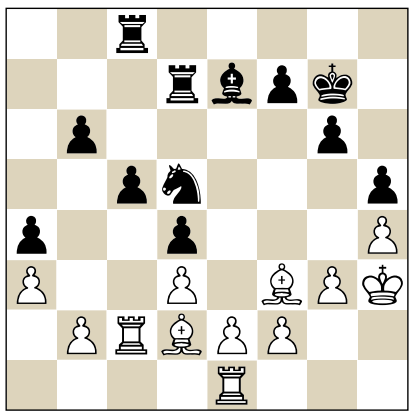


34...♖c8 An alternative was 34...♘f6, intending to meet 35.♕h3 with 35...♕b3. But there is nothing against allowing the queen swap.

35.♕h3 ♕xh3+ It was hard for Black to prevent the queen swap, since 35...f5 runs into the strong 36.g4!.

36.♔xh3 h5 Time to fix the kingside structure, now that the queen is no longer there to protect square f5. White's positional threat was 37.h5.



37.♖b1 White switches his attention back to the queenside.

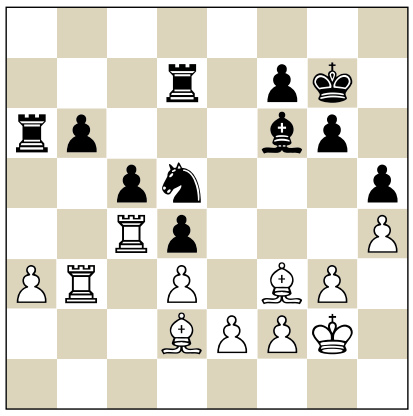
37...♖a8 38.♔g2 ♖a6 39.b3

There is no reason to postpone this breaking move any longer.

39...axb3 40.♖xb3 ♗f6

Well played. Black is going to take his knight to square c3.

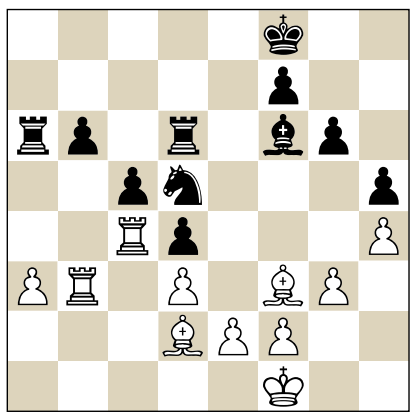
41.♖c4



41...♖d6 But this is inconsistent. 41...♘c3 would have given Black an equal position, in which he could double his rooks on the a-file. But even after the text there is still no cause for alarm.

42.♔f1 Prophylaxis. White provides extra cover for the e-pawn in case the black knight goes to c3, when the king's bishop would have a free hand.

42...♔f8 Black also takes his king closer to the centre, but this will cause problems. On g7, the king was utterly safe; beyond the reach of the white bishop pair.



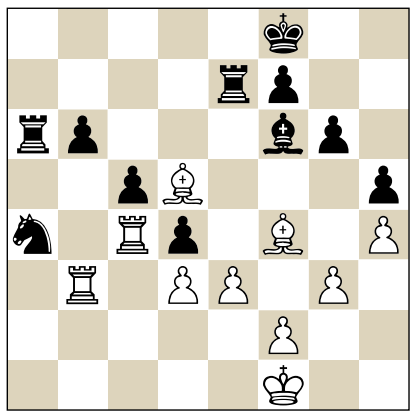
43.a4 White immediately takes the chance to sharpen the fight. With the black king on g7, the text would have been harmless.

43...♘c3

Too late, but there was no better way to see off the threat 44.a5.

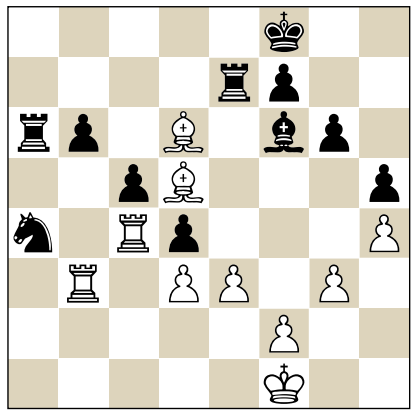
44.♗f4 ♖e6 45.e3! Carlsen in his element. Now his bishop pair gets very strong. The first critical moment of the game is on hand.

45...♘xa4 46.♗d5 ♖e7



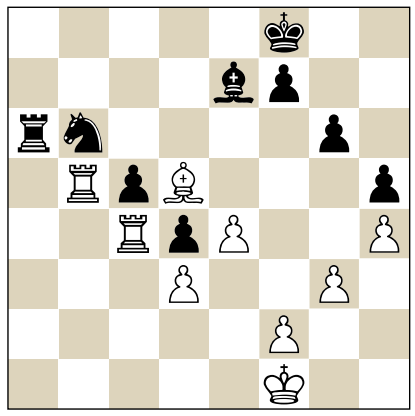
47.♗d6? Who wouldn't? White goes for the exchange, which seems to give Black no clear compensation. And there is also a psychological element that seems to justify White's move: Black must be punished for his thoughtless 42nd move.

Yet the text throws away White's hard-fought advantage. Instead of winning the exchange White should have relied on the strength of his bishop pair. The correct move was 47.♗c6!, intending to meet 47...♘c3 with 48.exd4. It is important for White to handle the situation in the centre carefully. He must make sure to retain his kingside structure, so that his king will have a safe square on g2. After 48...♘e2 49.♗h6+ ♔g8 50.dxc5 the white bishop pair reigns supreme.

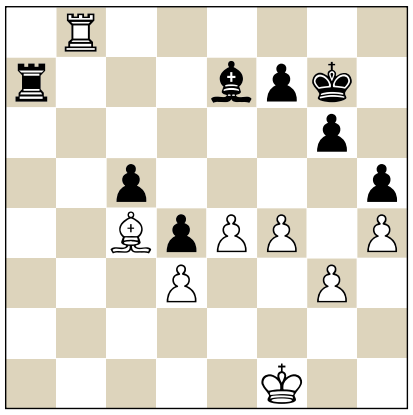


47...b5? Black also fails in this critical stage. With the text he was aiming to win back the exchange, but this does not solve his positional problems. There were other priorities. With 47...♘c3! Black could have restored the balance. White's problem is that his king's bishop is under attack, so that he will not have time to preserve his pawn structure. After 48.♗c6 ♖a1+ 49.♔g2 dxe3 50.fxe3 ♖a2+ the white king will find it hard to hide from the checks from the black rook.

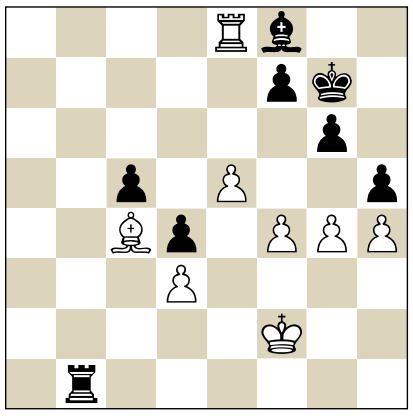
48.♗xe7+ ♗xe7 49.♖xb5 ♘b6 50.e4



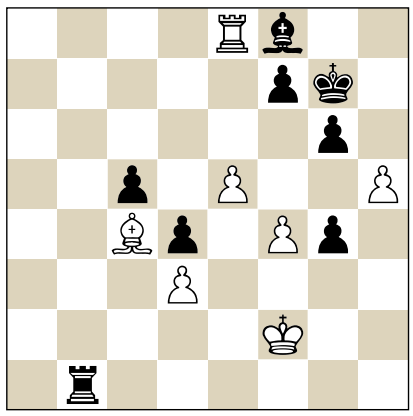
Now White's structure is fine again. He is aiming for an endgame with rooks and opposite-coloured bishops that offers him good winning chances.
50...♘xc4 51.♖b8+ ♔g7 52.♗xc4 ♖a7 53.f4



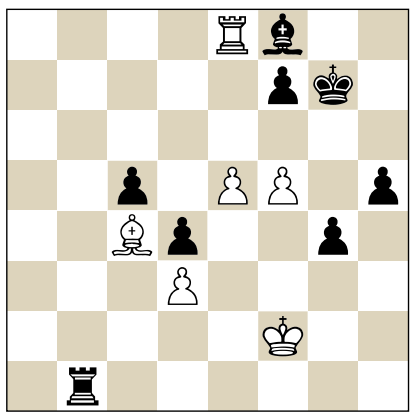
White sets his kingside majority rolling. As the black c-pawn is naturally blocked by the white bishop, White is, in fact, a pawn up. But he does not have the ideal structure to play for a win, since the white bishop is not manoeuvrable: it can only exert pressure on f7. With the d3- and d4-pawns on b3 and b4, White would have had an easy win.
53...♗d6 54.♖e8 ♖b7 55.♖a8 ♗e7 56.♔g2 ♖b1 57.e5 ♖e1 58.♔f2 ♖b1 59.♖e8 ♗f8 60.♖c8 ♗e7 61.♖a8 ♖b2+ 62.♔f3 ♖b1 63.♗d5 ♖e1 64.♔f2 ♖d1 65.♖e8 ♗f8 66.♗c4 ♖b1 67.g4!?



The second time-control was made, and Karjakin had little time left. Carlsen must have seen that, objectively, the white breaking move was insufficient for the win. In a practical game, however, the defender has a very difficult job, especially if he is short of time. In addition, the alternative winning plan with e5-e6 fails to yield a clear result and usually makes the defender's life easier.
67...hxg4 68.h5

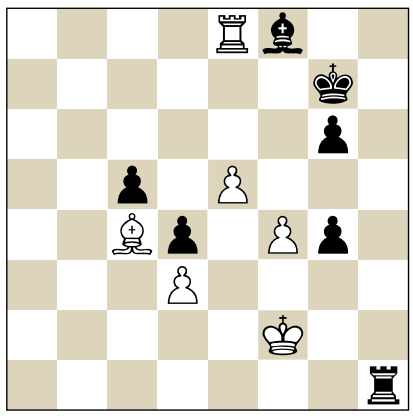


68...♖h1
A natural reaction: Black prevents 69.h6+ and forces White to take on g6. But this is not enough to save the game. Black should have boldly taken the pawn with 68...gxh5. The situation looks bad after 69.f5,

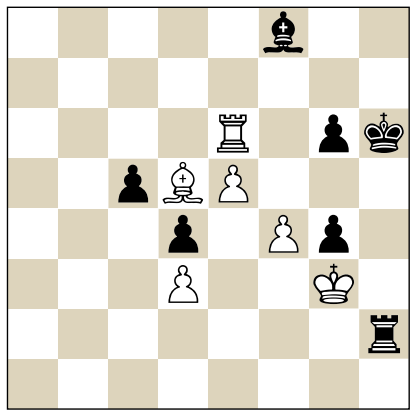


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

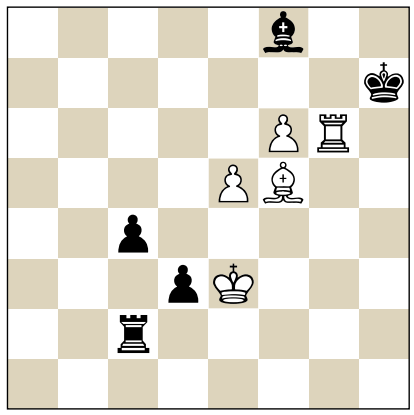
but Black can afford to give a piece. After 69...h4! 70.f6+ ♔g6 71.♖xf8 ♔f5 the black passed pawns are so strong that White has in fact only two moves to preserve the balance: 72.♖h8 and 72.♖g8. Black then gives perpetual check with his rook.
69.hxg6 fxg6



70.♖e6!
Accurate play. White is aiming at the weak pawn on g6. It is strange that there is no way for Black here to prevent White from getting two connected passed pawns.
70...♔h6 71.♗d5 ♖h2+ 72.♔g3



72...♖h3+
Slightly more tenacious would have been 72...♖a2, but even then White will win: 73.♗e4 c4 74.♖xg6+ ♔h5 75.♖g8!, and Black is too late with his counterplay.
73.♔xg4 ♖xd3 74.f5 ♖e3 75.♖xg6+ ♔h7 76.♗g8+ ♔h8 77.♔f4 ♖c3 78.f6 d3 79.♔e3 c4 80.♗e6 ♔h7 81.♗f5 ♖c2



82.♖g2+
The most systematic approach. White liquidates to a winning bishop ending. The immediate advance 82.e6 was also amply sufficient for the win.
82...♔h6 83.♖xc2 dxc2 84.♗xc2 ♔g5 85.♔d4 ♗a3 86.♔xc4 ♗b2 87.♔d5 ♔f4 88.f7 ♗a3 89.e6 ♔g5 90.♔c6 ♔f6 91.♔d7 ♔g7 92.e7
Black resigned. ■

Arkadij Naiditsch

CURRENT ELO: 2706
DATE OF BIRTH: October 25, 1985
PLACE OF BIRTH: Riga, Latvia
PLACE OF RESIDENCE: Baden-Baden, Germany

What is your favourite colour?
Blue.

What food makes you happy?
A steak, or Thai food.

And what drink?
Caipirinha.

Who is your favourite author?
Mark Twain. And I like fairy-tales.

What was the most interesting book you ever read?
Dalai Lama, *Ethics for the New Millennium*.

What is your all-time favourite movie?
Lord of War.

What is your favourite TV series?
I don't watch any.

Do you have a favourite actor?
Bruce Willis.

And a favourite actress?
Milla Jovovich.

What music do you like to listen to?
From 2Pac to AC/DC.

Do you have a favourite painter or artist?
For many years I've been trying to understand at least a bit about 'art'. I still can't see the difference between a 500 Euro and a 500k painting.

What do you see as your best result ever?
Winning the Dortmund Super Tournament in 2005.

What was the best game you ever played?
Maybe my recent win against Fridman at the Grenke Chess Classic.

Who is your favourite chess player of all time?
Magnus Carlsen. I don't see how to beat him ☺.

Is there a chess book that had a profound influence on you?
From my youth I remember *The Encyclopaedia of Rook Endgames*, a really useful book!

What was the most exciting chess game you ever saw?
The armageddon game between Grischuk and Karjakin from Piterenka 2012, really crazy!

What is the best chess country in the world?
Russia.

What are chess players particularly good at (except for chess)?
Not an easy question! I think focusing at important moments and quick thinking.

Do chess players have typical shortcomings?
Selfishness, self-centredness, which I think is quite normal for a professional sportsman.

Which three people would you like to invite for dinner?
I can't say much about people I have never met, but a dinner with Rihanna, Jessica Alba and Michelle Rodriguez would be a great one.

Do you have any superstitions concerning chess?
Probably I am one of the few professional chess players that don't have any.

Who or what would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
A trial lawyer.

Is there something you'd love to learn?
To play the guitar and to speak Spanish.

What is your greatest fear?
I am too young to have any.

What would you save from your house if it were on fire?
Of course my *Chess Evolution* books ☺.

If you could change one thing in the chess world, what would it be?
Federations should be there for the players and not the other way around.

What is the stupidest rule in chess?
The new 'zero tolerance rule' is making zero sense to me!

What will be the nationality of the 2050 chess world champion?
If chess survives as a competitive game that far, I think Chinese or Russian.

Is a knowledge of chess useful in everyday life?
Yes, very much.

What is the best thing that was ever said about chess?
I play chess, I have fun, I enjoy it – by a club player.

move by move goes from strength to strength

An impressive series — Sean Marsh, CHESS magazine

plus many more titles to be published in 2013, including:

A new and effective method of teaching the reader to understand openings.
—LM Larry Storch, Florida Chess

The series Move by Move is certainly the best method I know to teach an opening to the average club-player.
—B.H. Wilders, Nederlands Dagblad

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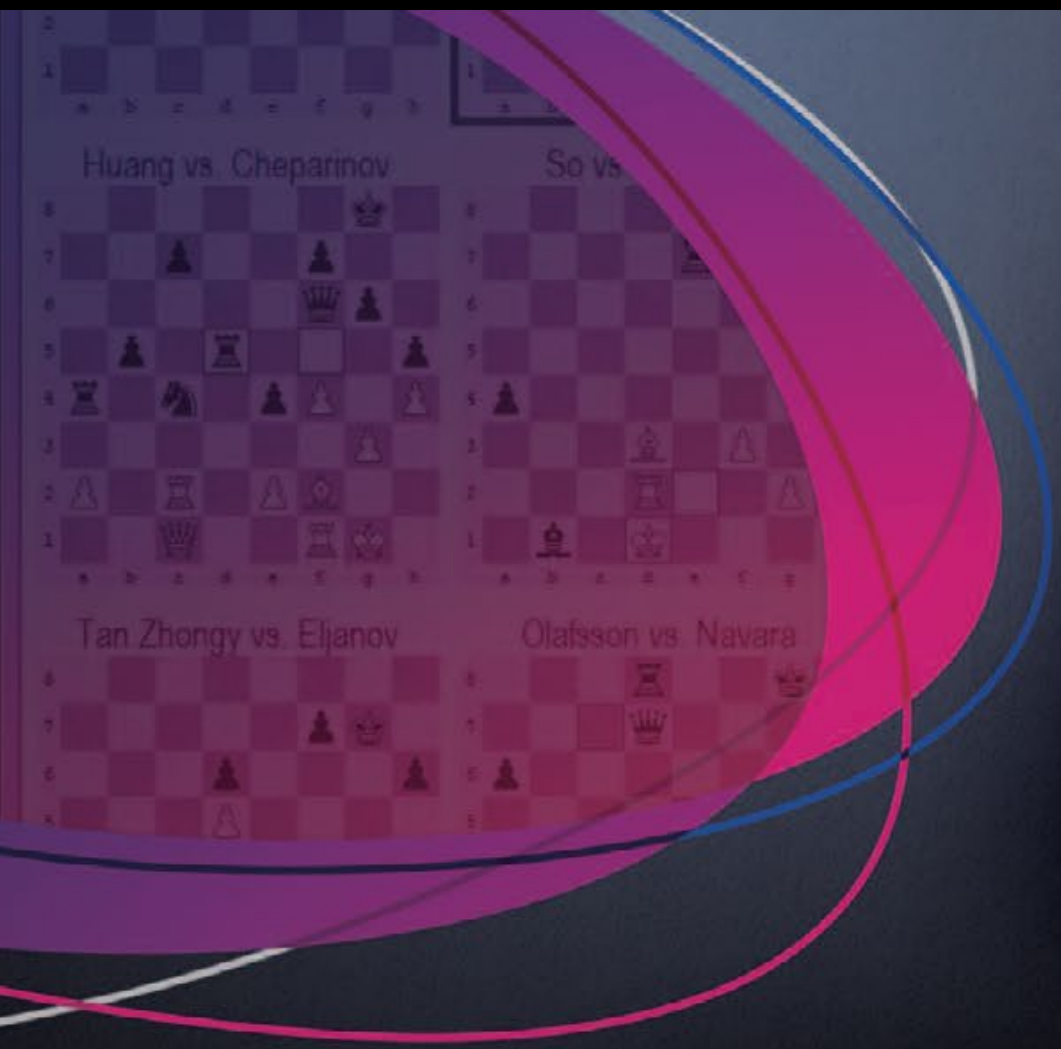

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